

A

# TESTIMONY AND WARNING

AGAINST

## Socinian and Unitarian Errors,

INTENDED

AS A SHORT SCRIPTURAL DEFENCE OF THE IMPORTANT DOCTRINES  
OF THE HOLY TRINITY—OF THE PROPER DIVINITY OF OUR  
BLESSED REDEEMER—OF THE PECULIAR SONSHIP OF CHRIST—OF  
THE REAL SATISFACTION OF JESUS FOR THE SINS OF HIS PEOPLE—  
OF THE PERSONALITY OF THE SPIRIT—OF THE PROPER DIVINITY  
OF THE HOLY GHOST—AND OF THE SPIRIT'S EFFICACIOUS AND  
INVINCIBLE OPERATIONS UPON THE SOULS OF MEN.

Addressed to

CHRISTIANS OF EVERY DENOMINATION,

BY THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERY.

- 1 PET. v. 12. *I have written briefly, exhorting, and  
testifying, that this is the true grace of God wherein  
ye stand.*
- 1 COR. iv. 14. *I write not these things to shame you,  
but as my beloved sons I warn you.*

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GLASGOW:

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BOOKSELLER, SALTMARKET. 1793.

At HAMILTON, March 21, 1792.

The Reformed Presbytery met, and constituted, \_\_\_\_\_  
federunt, &c.

A Motion was made and agreed to, that the Presbytery should publish a Testimony and Warning against Socinian and Unitarian Errors. After some conversation on this subject, an appointment was laid upon a member to prepare a draught of a Testimony and Warning against those errors, and to lay it before the Presbytery as soon as possible.

ARCHIBALD MASON, Cls.



At HAMILTON, September 26, 1792.

The Reformed Presbytery met, and constituted, \_\_\_\_\_  
federunt, &c.

THE draught of a Testimony and Warning against Socinian and Unitarian errors was, by the member appointed to prepare it, laid upon the table. The Presbytery having heard it read, and considered it attentively section by section, unanimously approved of it, and ordered it to be printed, under the inspection of the member who composed it, with all convenient speed.

ARCHIBALD MASON, Cls.



## TESTIMONY AND WARNING

BY THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERY,

AGAINST

SOCINIAN AND UNITARIAN ERRORS.

To all professors of the Protestant Reformed Religion, particularly those under our pastoral and presbyterial inspection.

*Beloved friends, brethren, and countrymen, grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

OUR lot is fallen in a day of trouble, of rebuke, and of blasphemy. In it the words of Paul are mournfully accomplished, *Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.* (a) The predictions of Peter likewise are therein verified, *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall fol-*

(a) 1 Tim. iv. 1.

*low their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. (b)* As a certain evidence of this melancholy truth, the doctrines of the Holy Trinity, of the divinity, sonship and satisfaction of Christ, and of the personality, divinity and work of the Holy Spirit, are in our times corrupted, rejected and opposed. In such a perilous time, it is of the utmost importance to the professors of Christianity, to know the truth as it is in Jesus, to have their minds fortified against the seductions of error, and to be established in the faith of the doctrines of the gospel. That we may contribute our mite towards the accomplishment of these great and valuable ends, we have, beloved friends and brethren, judged it our duty to address you, in a testimony and warning against some of the blasphemous and damnable heresies, which are prevailing in the present times. Considering ourselves as watchmen set for the defence of the gospel, upon the walls of our New Testament Jerusalem, whose duty it is to give faithful warning unto all, concerning sin and duty, truth and error; we did not see how we could be accountable unto our Lord, if we had remained silent at this time, when the floods of error all around us are lifting up their voice. Constrained therefore as we are by a desire to promote the glory of God, the interest of his truth, and the salvation of immortal souls, we earnestly solicit to what is now submitted unto you, a careful attention, and a favourable hearing.

The principal branches of the Socinian and Unitarian heresy appear to have had, in the Christian church, a very early rise. Before the apostle John had finished his course, a sect of corrupt Christians appeared, who denied the divinity of Christ, held many anti-scriptural opinions concerning his person, and thereby destroyed the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. In oppo-

sition unto these errors, this eminent servant of Jesus, in his gospel, epistles and revelations, did earnestly contend, and in the clearest manner asserted the doctrine of Christ's divinity. After the Roman Emperors had embraced Christianity, and it had been established in the empire, those heresies were revived by the ministry of Arius; and so much did they prevail, that, in the days of Athanasius, they almost totally overspread the Christian world. No sooner did the sun of righteousness arise upon some of the nations of the earth, with healing under his wings, in the reformation from Popery, than Satan, ever diligent to promote the interests of his kingdom, employed agents to darken the light of the gospel, by preaching and publishing damnable errors, relative to the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Those opinions have still continued in the Christian church, and of late years have greatly increased. The religious societies by law established in Scotland, England and Ireland, though in their constitutional articles these errors are rejected; have nevertheless many members who teach them unto their people every day. A late publication by a member of the church of Scotland, crowded with Socinian tenets, and the unfaithfulness of ecclesiastical judicatures in dealing with him are in our view, in this testimony and warning. Besides, in some ecclesiastical societies among the dissenters, especially in England and Ireland, are to be found corrupters of the doctrine of scripture, in these most essential articles. But above all, these religious societies called Unitarians, which have long existed in England, and are now gaining ground in Scotland, having settled themselves upon the impious foundation of denying and blaspheming the doctrine of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, are particularly in our eye in this publication.

It is not proposed to consider all the branches of divine truth, which Socinians and Unitarians pervert



and deny; a few of the most capital parts of that system only, are to be taken into consideration. A vindication of the doctrines of the gospel, on the seven following heads, in opposition unto the corruptions or denial of them, is what we have in view. The doctrines of the Holy Trinity—of the proper divinity of our blessed Redeemer—of the peculiar Sonship of Christ—of the real satisfaction of Jesus for the sins of his people—of the personality of the divine Spirit—of the proper divinity of the Holy Ghost—and of the Spirit's efficacious and invincible operation upon the souls of men. In handling these important articles, it may be proper to state the sentiments of Socinians and Unitarians, to represent the received doctrine of the church of Christ, and then exhibit the scripture evidence of the church's faith upon each of them. After these particulars have been considered in this manner, some conclusion of the whole may be subjoined.

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## SECTION I.

### OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

**T**HE Socinian and Unitarian teachers positively deny and ridicule this important doctrine. They believe and maintain that as the Godhead or divine nature is one, so there is but one divine person, whom they generally call God Almighty. Pompous as the titles are which they sometimes bestow upon the Lord Jesus Christ, yet they believe him to be inferior in nature and personality to God almighty. They all agree in denying the divinity, and most of them the personality of the Lord the Spirit. By entertaining such opinions of the Son and Holy Ghost, they plainly overthrow the doctrine of the Trinity.

SECT. I. *Socinian and Unitarian Errors.* 7

One of these expresses himself in the following words, "I hold that there is but one God, who is one person, one self-existent, infinite, eternal, almighty and supreme being, to whom none is equal, or to be compared, and from whom all beings, whether in heaven or in earth, derive their existence, and all they possess.—To me it appears that three divine persons make three Gods, as certainly as three human persons make three men, and that those who assert such doctrines expose Christianity to the derision of infidels, destroy the unity of the Godhead, distribute the perfections of Jehovah amongst other, and inferior beings, and rob him of his peculiar glory, which he has declared he will not give to another." \*

The church of Christ in every age has believed, and defended the doctrine which is so plainly denied by the Unitarians. Convinced as they have been that the divine nature or essence is one, they have also believed and maintained that this divine nature subsists in three divine equal and distinct persons. We shall represent their belief unto you in their own words. "I believe and confess my Lord God eternal, infinite, unmeasurable, incomprehensible, and invisible, one in substance, and three in persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost." (a) "We confess and acknowledge one only God;—one in substance, and yet in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." (b) "In the unity of this Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." (c) "In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance,

\* See Mr. Christie's book, entitled, the Holy Scriptures the only rule of faith, page 4, 5.

(a) Geneva con. article I.

(b) Scots con article I.

(c) Articles of the church of England, article I.

“ power, and eternity ; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.” (d)

Before we proceed to prove this truth, it may be of use to make the following observations, for clearing the scripture doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

The divine nature is one. The notion of a plurality of Gods is repugnant both to right reason, and to scripture revelation. The unity of the divine nature can be demonstrated easily from the light of reason in man, and also from the word of God. The light of reason teaches that the divine being is omnipotent, which proves the unity of his nature. The moment you suppose two or more beings possessed of omnipotence, you altogether destroy this perfection. You make a number of beings possess an equality of power, and however much may be ascribed unto them, none of them can be almighty. The infinity of God, as well as his omnipotence, establishes the truth of the divine unity. Seeing the divine nature is infinite without all bounds and limits, it is impossible that there can be any more Gods than one. To suppose two distinct beings to enjoy this perfection is a plain contradiction. The infinity of the one, and the infinity of the other, must destroy the infinity of both, and neither of them can be infinite. The absolute supremacy of God, which is a dictate of right reason concerning him, confirms the same truth. Were we to suppose two beings, having in their hands the absolute government of all things, both of them are immediately divested of this attribute. Seeing the divine nature has an absolute supremacy over every being, in his nature he must be one ; for in two or more distinct beings, this dominion over all cannot reside.—With the dictates of right reason, concerning the unity of God, scripture revelation perfectly agrees. The word of God being full of this truth, it will be

(d) Westminster con. chap. ii. sect. 3.



unnecessary to multiply texts for the confirmation of it. The words of Moses to the Israelitish tribes clearly declare it to us; *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.* (a) The royal David is equally clear with the prophet Moses upon this truth, when he sings, *For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God.* (b) The words of Christ to the young man also confirm this truth; *There is none good but one, that is God.* (c) In the words of Paul this article of faith is likewise represented; *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* (d) As this text obliges us to believe, in opposition unto all who would multiply mediators, the unity of his person and office; so it constrains us to maintain, against all who plead for a plurality of Gods, the unity of the divine nature.

There are three persons in the one Godhead. Scripture revelation warrants us to say, that the one divine nature subsists in three persons. As there is a sense in which God is one, so there is a sense in which he is three; one in nature, and three in personality. It is a common and very just observation, Christian brethren, which deserves your attention and remembrance, that the unity of the essence or being of God, does not destroy the difference of the persons; nor does the distinguishing of the persons infer any division of the essence. Instead of confirming this truth here, which is reserved for the latter part of this section, it may be necessary to explain some terms; \* which, in speaking on the doctrine of the

(a) Deut. vi. 4. (b) Psalm xviii. 31. (c) Matth. xix. 17.

(d) 1 Tim. ii. 5.

\* In the whole of this testimony and warning, the ordinary terms, on the different subjects treated therein, are made use of in the strict theological sense, in which they have always been used by Calvinists. The most of them indeed are scriptural terms, and those which are not so are

Trinity, we are obliged to employ. The being of God, the divine nature, the Godhead, and the essence of God, signify the same thing. They all express what Jehovah is in himself essentially considered, and that infinite existence or thing, of which each of the divine persons is possessed. The word person must be frequently used on these subjects, and that with scripture authority; for there we read of the person of the Father, and the person of Christ. Various definitions have been given of a person in the Godhead, which, though differently expressed, amount to the same thing; three of them may be mentioned. "A divine person is the divine essence subsisting in a special manner, on account of a special and incommunicable property:" or, "a mode of subsistence in the divine essence distinct from others in the same individual essence, by a peculiar and incommunicable property:" or, "the Godhead itself as subsisting with some distinct and natural relation unto another person possessed of the same nature." From these definitions, which are mentioned in humility, we may form some idea, as far as we are capable of understanding it, of what is meant by a person in the Trinity; it is just the divine nature subsisting with a personal property. The person of the Father is the divine nature as it subsists, with the personal property of begetting the Son: the person of the Son is the divine nature as it subsists, with the personal property of being begotten of the Father: and the person of the Holy Ghost is the divine nature as it subsists, with the personal property of proceed-

warranted by the word of God; because words of the same import are found in the scripture, and because the doctrines represented by them are most certainly founded therein. We do not intend either to mention or explain them here, as their meaning will be easily understood when they occur in the different sections.

ing from the Father and Son. For there are three who bear record in heaven, the Father, and the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.

The three persons, in which the divine nature subsists, are equal. There is not any inferiority of one of these persons to another. It is a confirmation of their perfect equality, that the order in which they are mentioned is varied, in different places of scripture. The Father is first mentioned, in the institution of baptism. The Son is named first, in the apostolic benediction. And in Paul's account of the gifts and privileges of the church, the Spirit is mentioned before the other two. Were there a natural inferiority of one of these persons to another, the order of their subsistence would never be changed; but to prove their equality it is more frequently varied than it is kept. The persons of the Godhead are equal in nature. Each of them possesses the entire divine nature. They are all in scripture called God, in the highest sense of the term, which could not be, did the divine nature not belong to each of them.—They are equal in all perfections. Infinite sovereignty, unerring wisdom, almighty power, untainted holiness, inviolable veracity, and all other divine perfections, equally belong unto the three who bear record in heaven.—They are equal in intelligence. The understanding of each of them is infinite, and therefore must be one and the same. They are not possessed of three distinct and different understandings, but one infinite understanding, which cannot be multiplied, is common to them all. This is the foundation of that eternal and necessary harmony in their judgment, concerning all persons and things, which subsists among them.—They are equal in will. Possessed as they are of one understanding, the same will is common to them all. This infinite will, which was exercised from eternity, in forming the sovereign and unchangeable decrees of God, is equally the will of the Father, Son, and Holy



**Ghost.** This will, as it is manifested to men in the divine law, for the rule of their obedience, or discovered to them as a rule of faith, in the glorious gospel, belongs equally to each of the divine persons. This will which is fulfilled in the divine conduct towards angels and men, whereby he does what he will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, pertains to the three who bear record in heaven. This renders them perfectly, eternally and necessarily harmonious, in all the objects of their choice and aversion.—They are equal in operation. The divine works of creation, providence and redemption are ascribed both to God essentially considered, and to each of the adorable three.

The persons in the Godhead are to be distinguished from one another. They may be distinguished by their peculiar names, their natural relations, their personal properties, their order of subsistence, and their order of operation. The divine persons are to be distinguished by their peculiar or personal names. The divine names mentioned in scripture are of two kinds, those that are essential and common, and those which are personal or peculiar. Jehovah, God, Lord and the like belong to the former; the Father, the Son or Word, and the Holy Spirit or Ghost, pertain unto the latter class. The former are called essential, because they are names of the divine nature; and they are called common, because they are given to each of the divine persons. The latter class of names are called personal, because they belong unto the divine persons; and they are peculiar, because the name that is given to one is never bestowed upon the other two divine persons as such. Not by the essential and common names, but by those which are personal and peculiar, are the divine persons to be distinguished.—By their natural relations. There is a difference between their natural and oeconomic relations; of the former but not of the latter are we

now speaking. In the œconomy of man's redemption, the Son stands in the relation of a servant to the Father, and the Holy Spirit is the missionary of them both; but it is not by these relations that they are properly distinguished as persons in the Godhead. By their natural relations however the divine persons are distinguished. The first person stands in the relation of a Father to the second, the second bears the relation of a Son to the first, and the Holy Ghost stands in the relation of a Spirit to the other two; and by these we discern them as distinct.—By their personal properties. It may be of use to observe that the divine persons cannot be distinguished by their natural properties. All the perfections of the Godhead are the natural properties of each of the divine persons, and thereby we are never to distinguish them. By their personal properties this may be done. It is the personal property of the Father to beget the Son; of the Son to be begotten of the Father; and of the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and Son; by which properties they may be distinguished from one another. These properties are called personal, because they do not belong to the divine nature, otherwise they would all pertain to each of the divine persons, which is not the case; but they belong unto the divine persons, each having his own personal property. These natural relations and personal properties of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are necessary. They do not originate in the divine will, but they are founded in the divine nature, and are essential unto its very being.—By their order of subsistence. The Father is the first, the Son the second, and the Holy Spirit the third in this order. In the institution of baptism they are mentioned according to the natural order of their subsistence; *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* (a) This order of their per-

(a) Matth. xxviii. 19.

sonal subsistence is clearly proved by their names, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Paternity being ascribed unto the first, filiation to the second, and proceeding to the third person, their order of subsistence cannot be otherwise. Their personal properties ratify the same truth. Since it belongs to the first person to beget, to the second to be begotten, and to the third to proceed from both the first and second, this must be the order of subsisting among them.—By their order of operation. The order observed by them, in their operations, is the same with their order of subsistence. The Father is the first in the order of divine working, and is the beginner of them all; the Son is the second in that order, and carries on these operations; and the Holy Ghost is the third in this order, and is the finisher of all the works of God. This truth may be confirmed from the work of redemption only, without taking a view of those of creation and providence at all. The contrivance of the whole scheme is ascribed unto God the Father; the purchase of all its blessings is attributed unto God the Son; and the application thereof belongs unto God the Holy Ghost: For sinners are saved by the love or grace of the Father, through the redemption or righteousness of Christ the Son, and the renewing or sanctification of the Holy Ghost. This order of operation among the adorable three, and not any natural inferiority of one of these persons to another, is the reason why the Father is said to work by the Son, and the Father and Son by the Holy Ghost, which we see expressed in the three following texts of scripture. *Who created all things by Jesus Christ. (a) That he would grant you—to be strengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner man. (b) Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had*

(a) Eph. iii. 9.

(b) Eph. iii. 16.



given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen. (c)

The subsistence of the divine nature in three divine and equal persons is a mystery; and hence it is called *the mystery of God*. (d) This is a necessary mystery. It is not a mystery of the divine will, but it is a mystery of the divine nature. It is not like the mystery of the union of the two natures in the person of Christ, which has its foundation in the sovereign will of God; but it is a mystery that is founded in, and is essential unto the very being of God. While all the mysteries of grace depend upon the good pleasure of Jehovah, it is the excellency of this mystery, not to depend upon his will at all, but, like all his necessary and essential perfections, to spring from his nature.—It is an incomprehensible mystery. The highest intelligences among angels and men cannot search into the unfathomable deeps of this mystery. They may by divine revelation know that it is, but as to the mode of it, they can have no conception. While the divine nature is infinite, and the creature finite, which shall for ever be, this must be the case. To impress our minds with a conviction of this, that humbling question is proposed to the children of men; *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* (e)—It is a glorious mystery; a mystery which displays the peculiar glory of the divine nature and persons. Of no created nature is this a perfection, that it subsists in three persons; nor of any three created persons can it be affirmed, that one individual essence is common to them all; but this is true both of the divine nature and persons, which is a peculiar glory of both.—It is an eternal mystery. The divine nature will forever subsist in three divine and equal persons; and therefore this mystery will never end. As God is unchangeable in

(c) Acts i. 2.

(d) Col. ii. 2.

(e) Job xi. 7.

his nature and perfections, so he is immutable in this most glorious property of his essence. This mystery will continue through all eternity to be an object of wonder and praise to angels and redeemed men.—It is a mystery to the creatures only. There is not any thing in the nature or works of God that is a mystery to himself; for he perfectly knows himself, and all the effects of his power and goodness. When any thing therefore about the nature or works of God is said to be mysterious, it applies to the creature only. When we assert that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is a wonderful mystery, it is not so with respect to God; but it is so with regard to the limited capacities of the creature, which are necessarily unfit for comprehending this glorious nature, and its properties.

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is known to the children of men by divine revelation only. It is a doctrine which is peculiar to the scriptures, and sinners could never have found it out by the light of nature. It is true, there are a few sayings in the writings of one or two of the heathen philosophers, which have some analogy to the scripture doctrine of the Trinity; but these sentences in their works, if they were at all in the originals, which some question, behaved either to be borrowed from the Old Testament scriptures, or learned from conversation with the Jews. Nothing in all the works of God can teach fallen men the knowledge of this mystery. To divine revelation alone are we indebted for this information. The scriptures are a light that shineth into our hearts, to give us the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The knowledge of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which is one special part of the glory of God, is given in divine revelation to us, by the ministry of Christ the great prophet of the church. The harbinger of Jesus declares, *No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the*

*bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* (a) These words clearly prove, that the Lord Jesus, by his personal ministry, by the ministry of his prophets before his incarnation, and by that of his apostles after his death, hath given to the church, in the word of God, a discovery of the nature, persons, perfections, counsels and works of the great Jehovah. But for this ministry, impossible it had been for the children of men to have obtained the knowledge of this mystery. All our knowledge of it is to be learned from the sacred scriptures. All the considerations, which tend to strengthen our faith in this divine doctrine, are to be drawn from this source. The sacred records furnish us with all those arguments that are necessary, or can be used, for the information of those who are ignorant, the conviction of them who are unbelievers, and the silencing of such as are opposers of this article of faith. This therefore testifies to us the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; for therein, and by no other mean, are we informed, *that there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.* (b)

The doctrine of the Trinity is a fundamental article of the Christian faith, the belief of which is absolutely necessary to salvation. The rejected Jews, the followers of Mahomet, the antient Arians, the latter Socinians and modern Unitarians agree, in denying the doctrine of the Trinity; whereby they both reject the salvation of God, and seal their own condemnation. To the salvation of every soul of man, the belief of this doctrine is essential. For the confirmation of this, it will be necessary to make and illustrate the following observation; there are many truths of the gospel, the faith of which is necessary to our salvation, whereof we can have no proper idea at all, without believing the doctrine of the Trinity. That we may obtain salvation,

(a) John i. 18.

(b) 1, John v. 7.



it is needful to believe the eternal council of peace among the adored three, wherein the whole plan of saving sinners was adjusted, the eternal resolves of infinite wisdom and love were formed, and the everlasting covenant of peace was established. What idea can we have of this, if the doctrine of the Trinity is denied? Of the incarnation of the Son of God, declared unto us in these words, *when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,* (a) we can have no proper knowledge, unless we believe the doctrine of the Trinity; and surely a scriptural belief of this is necessary to our salvation. In vain do men dream of salvation, if they do not believe upon the infinitely meritorious obedience of the Son of God, and his infinitely satisfactory sufferings in our nature and place; and how can we do this if we reject this glorious doctrine? Salvation is impossible to that man, who does not know, believe and experience the special and invincible operations of the Spirit by means of the word upon his soul; But how can these be the objects of our knowledge, belief or experience, if the doctrine of the Trinity is not an article of our faith? If we believe not this mystery of the divine nature, we can have no saving knowledge of the love of the Father, in giving his Son, and sending his Spirit, for accomplishing our salvation. If this doctrine is denied, how can we know the grace of Christ in becoming poor, that he might enrich us by his poverty? Or how can we be acquainted with the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, in a course of opposition to this sacred truth? Rejecting this doctrine as many do, we can never be sharers of saving grace, and spiritual peace; for these blessings come *from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven Spirits of God which are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ.* (b) These few hints sufficiently

(a) Gal. iv. 4.

(b) Rev. i. 4, 5.

shew that the faith of this truth is necessary unto the sinner's salvation.

For the confirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity, and the confutation of all Socinian and Unitarian errors on this head, we are now to bring forward the scripture evidence thereof, which may be collected in the following arguments.

The account we have, in the sacred scripture, of the work of creation, affords an incontestible proof of the doctrine of the Trinity. If we find it evident, that scripture ascribes the work of creating all things to three different persons, as creation is competent to God only, each of these persons must be divine. As there is no dispute concerning God the Father, we shall only represent to you what the scripture declares, relative to the Son and the Holy Ghost. Of the former we are told, *all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* (a) Christ is here declared to be the creator of all things, and without his divine and personal agency, no creature received its existence. This work is also ascribed unto Christ in that remarkable description given of him by the apostle, of which the following words are a part; *for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were made by him and for him.* (b) Here we have an enumeration of the works of creation, and the different places where they exist; of them all Jesus is the glorious maker, the first cause, and the last end. Concerning the Holy Spirit the scripture informs us, that the work of creation belongs unto him. In the history of creation given by Moses, we have these remarkable words, *and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* (c) This text warrants us to believe, that the Holy Ghost by his infi-

(a) John i. 3.

(b) Col. i. 16.

(c) Gen. i. 3.

nite, divine and all producing influence formed the creatures that were made. As a farther confirmation of this, the words of Job and Elihu may be mentioned: The former declares *by his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens.* (d) The latter affirms, *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the almighty hath given me life.* (e) In these words the work of creation is plainly ascribed unto the Holy Ghost. Since scripture information concerning this work of God, plainly represents three different agents to be concerned therein; we are surely warranted to conclude, that the infinite nature of God subsists in three divine and equal persons.

The doctrine of the sacred Trinity stands confirmed from the scriptural account of the work of providence. The conservation and government of the creatures is a divine work, equally with their creation. If the scripture represents three distinct persons employed in this work, there must be three persons possessed of the divine nature. The equal concern of the Father and the Son, in the work of providence, is affirmed by Christ, when he, on a particular occasion, said to the Jews, *my Father worketh hitherto and I work.* (f) The concern of our Mediator in the work of providence is asserted in as strong terms, as the Father's concern in that work can possibly be expressed. *By him all things consist,* (g) and *upholding all things by the word of his power,* (h) are the expressions which scripture uses to represent Jesus as the God of providence; and what phrases can be more clear or significant? That almighty word, by which all the creatures of God are upheld in their being, and directed in their operations, is not the word of the Father only; but it is the word of him also, who by himself purged our sins. The concern of the eternal Spirit in the work of pro-

(d) Job xxvi. 13. (e) Job xxxiii. 4. (f) John v. 17.

(g) Col. i. 17. (h) Heb. i. 3.



vidence is equally clear from the sacred record. Upon this point hear the holy Psalmist, *thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.* (c) These words represent a glorious effect, the continued creation or conservation of all things, and the renovation of the face of the earth. They inform us also of the powerful cause, the Spirit of God who is sent forth for this end. Added to this evidence, you may also consider the testimony of the Lord's prophet; *seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his Spirit it hath gathered them.* (d) As the Holy Spirit moved upon the face of the waters, and by his all creating energy formed the creatures at first; so by his almighty personal agency he daily renews, gathers and preserves all the creatures of God.

The general plan of our redemption, laid down in the sacred scriptures, clearly establishes the doctrine of the Trinity. Many texts might be introduced, which represent the method of God's grace to men, as confirmations of this fundamental article of the Christian faith; we shall however confine ourselves to the four following. The apostle Paul, when he is representing Jesus as a priest reconciling us to God, and as a prophet preaching peace to them who were afar off, and to them who were nigh, has these remarkable words; *for through him we both have an access by one Spirit to the Father.* (e) He again declares, *but we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.* (f) The apostle Peter also states the general plan of our

(c) Psal. civ. 30.

(d) Isa. xxxiv. 16.

(e) Eph. ii. 18.

(f) 2 Thef. ii. 13, 14.

redemption in such a way as confirms this doctrine; *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* (a) To these may be added the words of the apostle John, *grace be unto you and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ.* (b) In these scriptures we have one divine person represented, as the glorious object to whom sinners have access, as chusing them from the beginning to salvation by his eternal foreknowledge, and as the author of grace and peace to the church. In them we have another divine person mentioned, as the glorious channel of the sinner's access unto God, as the author of that glory, to the enjoyment of which they are advanced, as having shed meritorious blood for their redemption, and as the source from which grace and peace flow to believers. Therein we have a third divine person presented to our view, as being by his divine influence the cause of the sinners access to the Father, as the blessed author of their sanctification, and as being equally with the Father and Christ, the fountain of the spiritual and eternal blessings of grace and peace. Who, that considers these things aright, can refuse his assent to the scripture doctrine of the Trinity.

The incarnation of the Son of God affords an undeniable proof of this doctrine. This glorious event was foretold in antient prophecy, it was the matter of the divine promise, the object of the churches faith, and the sum of their joyful expectation. *Behold a virgin shall conceive, says Isaiah, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* (c) In exact agreement with this Micah proclaims, *but thou Bethlehem Ephratah though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet*

(a) 1 Peter i. 2.

(b) Rev. i. 4, 5.

(c) Isaiah vii. 14.

out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. (c) Let us see what the New Testament records concerning the accomplishment of all this. Of the Son of God it is said, *that he took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men* (d), and *that he took on him the seed of Abraham*. (e) The agency of God the Father in this work is expressed to us in these words, *but when the fulness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law*; (f) and again *a body hast thou prepared me*. (g) The concern of the Holy Spirit in Christ's incarnation is very particularly stated in the words of the angel to the virgin, *the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*. (h) This collected view of the incarnation of Christ represents it to be the work of the three one God. God the Father sends his Son, and, by authoritative appointment, prepares for him an human nature. God the Holy Ghost, by his personal agency, exerts that omnipotence, which is common to each of the divine persons, and essential to the divine essence in the actual formation of Christ's human nature. And God the Son takes on him the human nature, and assumes it into an union with the Godhead in his person. From this scriptural account of the manifestation of God in the flesh, the trinity of persons in the divine essence clearly appears.

The doctrine of the Trinity may likewise be demonstrated from the baptism of Christ. An account of this solemn transaction is given by all the evangelists: that of Matthew need only be mentioned, which he conveys to us in the following words: *and Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway*

(c) Mic. v. 2.

(d) Phil. ii. 7.

(e) Heb. ii. 16.

(f) Gal. iv. 4,

(g) Heb. x. 5.

(h) Luke i. 35.



*out of the water ; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him ; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*

(a) To every unprejudiced mind the doctrine of the Trinity, from these words, must be evident. Here we have the blessed Mediator receiving an immeasurable unction of the Spirit, and divinely declared to be God's beloved Son in whom he is well pleased. Here we have the Holy Spirit descending from heaven, lighting upon the Son of God, abiding upon him, and filling his human nature with an immeasurable degree of spiritual gifts and grace ; which could not be were he not a divine person. And here we have the eternal Father proclaiming with an audible voice from heaven, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. In this transaction the divine persons are represented in such a way as proves the divinity of each of them, and at the same time confirms this article of the Christian faith.

The baptism of Christians is a proof of the doctrine under our consideration. The baptism of Christ is not a more convincing proof of this point, than is the baptism of all his followers. The divine direction for the administration of this ordinance to the children of men, is expressed to the church by Christ himself ; *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* (b) The three divine persons are here mentioned by their peculiar and personal names, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The unity of their nature is not obscurely hinted in that expression, baptizing them in the name, not in their names. If one of these persons is divine, they must all be so ; for none of them is placed below another, or described with any mark of inferiority. It is truly unaccountable

(a) Matth. iii. 16.

(b) Matth. xxviii. 19.

how any professing the Christian name, and believing the divine institution of this ordinance, can banish from their minds the belief of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

The promise of the Spirit unto the church is another confirmation of this truth. In that remarkable discourse delivered by Christ unto his disciples, immediately before his last sufferings and death, this promise is recorded in the following words: *I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you for ever. (a) But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things. (b) But when the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. (c) It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you. And when he is come he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. (d)* In these words, the Lord Christ speaks of one person called the Father, giving the Spirit, sending the Spirit, having the Spirit both sent and proceeding from him; and must not he be a divine person? The Lord Jesus speaks of himself, in whose name the Father sends the Spirit, who himself sends the Spirit, and of whom the Spirit testifies to the children of men; and must not he also be a divine person? Will the eternal Father send the Spirit in the name of a creature? Can a creature send the Holy Ghost? Will the eternal Spirit testify of a creature to the church of God? The Redeemer in these words speaks of a third person called the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, and Spirit of truth, sent by the Father and proceeding from him, sent by Christ, testifying of him, teaching the church all things, abiding with them

(a) John xiv. 16.

(b) John xiv. 26.

(c) John xv. 26.

(d) John xvi, 7, 8.

for ever, and convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and must not he likewise possess the divine nature? These titles and works surely are not competent to a creature.

The way in which the members of the church receive gifts and privileges, and true believers obtain the blessings of salvation, confirms the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. An illustration of the former branch of this proof we have in the words of Paul; *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but the same God, which worketh all in all.* (a) Can human language more clearly convey any idea to the rational mind, than those words represent to us three divine persons equally concerned, in bestowing upon the church all the different gifts, administrations, and operations which she enjoys. The latter branch of this proof may be illustrated in a few instances. Regeneration is one of the blessings of salvation of which all believers partake. It consists in the renovation of the faculties of the soul, and planting in the man the divine image. This blessing comes from the Father, for believers *are born of God.* (b) It comes from the Son, *for they are created again in Christ Jesus.* (c) It proceeds also from the Holy Ghost, *for they are born of the Spirit.* (d)—Adoption is another blessing of the covenant of grace, whereby the children of men, who were among the world lying in wickedness, become the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. This blessing comes from the Father; for he *puts them among the children.* (e) Bestowed also it is by the Son; because *he gives them power to become the sons of God.* (f) By the Holy Ghost is this blessing granted to sinners; as he is the Spirit of adoption whereby *they cry Abba, Father.* (g)

(a) 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6. (b) 1 John iii. 9. (c) Eph. ii. 10.

(d) John ii. 5. (e) Jer. iii. 19. (f) John i. 12. (g) Rom. viii. 15.



—Justification and sanctification are two precious blessings of salvation ; by the former sinners are delivered from condemnation, and entitled to the blessings of grace and glory ; and by the latter they are conformed in heart and life, to the nature, image, and law of God. As these blessings are given by God the Father, so also they come to us by Christ and the Spirit, according to that lively oracle of inspiration, *and such were some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* (a) If all the outward privileges and common gifts enjoyed by the church come from Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; and if each of these divine persons has a peculiar operation in bestowing saving blessings on true believers, the divine essence must subsist in three distinct and equal persons.

The benediction of the church clearly unfolds the doctrine of the Trinity. By the commandment of the everlasting God, the church is blessed in the following manner ; *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen.* (b) When these words, are pronounced over the congregations of Christians by the servants of Jesus, the blessing of a three one God is exhibited in a ministerial and authoritative manner to the church, upon which their faith should be exercised. This is a giving the blessing unto, and putting it upon the people of God, which, being heard and received by faith, makes persons possessors of the blessing. In whose name are they blessed ? In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the name of God, and in the name of the Holy Ghost. With what are they blessed ? with the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. Impossible it is that this could be said, or that all this could be true, if there are not three persons in the Godhead. Having

(a) 1. Cor. vi. ii.

(b) 2. Cor. xiii. 14.

viewed the benediction of the church in her New Testament state, it may be proper to consider that also which obtained during the former dispensation; and there we will find no obscure intimation of the doctrine of the Trinity. By divine appointment the church in that period was blessed in the following words; *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* (a) By a threefold repetition of the name Jehovah, and with a threefold class of spiritual blessings, the church of old had the divine benediction pronounced on them. This bears such analogy to the New Testament form, as makes this doctrine evident from the one as well as the other. Guided as we are by the clearer light, rising out of the churches benediction under the new dispensation; we are warranted, with certainty and assurance, to infer the doctrine of the Trinity, from that which obtained under the old.

The heavenly attestation of the gospel record is another proof of this article of the church's faith. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.* (b) The truth attested to the faith of mankind by these witnesses is, that Jesus is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; that he is come by water and blood, for the salvation of sinners; and that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. They are described from their number, they are three; from their work, they bear record; from the place of their glorious residence, in heaven; from their names, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and from the unity of their nature, these three are one. Persons surely they must be, for each of them bears a personal office, appears as a witness; and performs a personal work, emitting a testimony. As they are

(a) Numb. vi. 24, 25, 26.

(b) 1 John v. 7.

three in their personality, so they are one in essence: for these three are one, one nature, one essence, one thing.

From what has been offered above, dear Christian friends and brethren, we are constrained to believe, that in the unity of the divine nature there are three persons, of one substance, power and eternity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Each of these articles of proof represents three possessed of all the glory of the Deity. To believe they are three Gods we cannot, without contradicting reason and revelation; for both concur in establishing the unity of the divine nature. Three therefore they must be in their personality, while they are one in their essence. Deeply impressed as your minds should be with abhorrence of all Antitrinitarian errors; let it be your constant study to know, believe, contemplate, adore, profess, and defend the infinitely important doctrine of the sacred Trinity.

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## SECTION II.

### OF THE PROPER DIVINITY OF OUR BLESSED REDEEMER.

**A**LTHOUGH the different arguments already mentioned, which establish the doctrine of the Trinity, confirm at the same time the divinity of Christ's person; yet the opposition to this article of truth being so great, the belief of it so important, and the scripture evidence of it so full, we have judged it needful to consider it by itself.

All Socinians and Unitarians are unanimous, in denying the proper divinity of the Son of God. They indeed bestow upon our Redeemer a variety of very e-



minent titles ; such as our great Lord and Master, our blessed Lord, our divine Saviour, our divine Master and Lord, and sometimes mention the divinity and divine nature in him ; but all this is perfectly consistent with their positive denial of the real and proper divinity of of his person. Whither these heretics give those names to Jesus, with a view to make some satisfaction for their sacrilegious robbery committed upon the Son of God, or to deceive the hearts of the simple we cannot tell ; but surely they are of no use to represent the glory of Christ to the children of men, as connected with their other sentiments concerning him. It would be exceedingly tedious to quote the various expressions used by authors of this persuasion, whereby their denial of Jesus's divinity clearly appears ; and therefore a few of them only shall be mentioned. Dr. M'Gill in his practical essay has the following expressions, “ Jesus Christ did not arrogantly seize and  
 “ retain to himself, these God-like powers and honours which he possessed, or was entitled to ; he regarded them not as his prey or booty ; as acquisitions of his own, and for his own use, but as the  
 “ gifts of God, to be employed only for his glory.”  
 (a) “ Jesus assumed no honour to himself, but in  
 “ consequence of the divine vocation. (b)” “ Almighty God,” that is according to this author God the Father “ deigned to tabernacle with men,  
 “ in a person of their own order, and to manifest his  
 “ power, wisdom, goodness and holiness, in a man  
 “ like themselves. (c)” Dr. Price, a famed Unitarian in England, has the following words, “ It is the conviction that the true object of religious worship is  
 “ God the Father only, that in a great measure makes  
 “ us Protestant Dissenters.—There are other saviours, but they are his gifts ; and of these the

(a) Practical essay on the death of Jesus Christ, page 414.

(b) Page 247.

(c) Page 487, 488.

“ first and best is that Saviour who left heaven to deliver us from sin and death, and to lift us to an happy immortality. To this Saviour we owe an ardent gratitude; but the gratitude we owe to him is nothing compared with that which we owe to the God who gave him, and whom alone we know to be ever near us to hear and notice our prayers and praises.” (a) Dr. Priestly has the following assertion, “ I am fully persuaded that Christ was a man like ourselves; and consequently, that his pre-existence, as well as that of other men, has no foundation in reason, or in scripture.” (b)

In order to represent to you, Chrillian friends, the received doctrine of the church upon this head, in opposition to these blasphemies, we need only lay before your view the following quotation from the Westminster confession of faith. “ The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father; did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man’s nature with all the essential properties, and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined in one person, without conversion, composition or confusion. Which person is very God, and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.” (c) The following part of this Section shall be employed in bringing forth the scripture evidence of the true, real and proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The applying to Christ, in the writings of the New

(a) Holy scriptures the only rule of faith, page 254.

(b) Preface to letters to Dr. Horsley.

(c) Westminster confession, chap viii sect. 2.

Testament, several texts of scripture contained in the Old, which belong unto the true God only, proves his proper divinity. If it can be shown that many things, said of the true God in the Old Testament, are applied to Christ in the New, it will be undeniably proved that he, equally with his eternal Father, possesses the divine nature. Of the great Jehovah it is said *of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shall thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.* (a) All these great and glorious, things God the Father says of the Son; and thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shall thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. (b)—Isaiah thus describes a glorious vision which he had of the great Jehovah; *In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings, with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* (c) That Jesus Christ was this Jehovah, whose glory on this occasion was manifested to the prophet, is clear from the evangelist's infallible interpretation of it, when, after quoting the words of this chapter, he says, *these things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.* (d)—Various instances we have, in the writings of Isaiah, of the

(a) Psalm cii. 25, 26, 27.

(b) Heb. i. 10, 11, 12.

(c) Isa. vi. 1, 2, 3.

(d) John xii. 41.



great Jehovah describing himself by this peculiar character, *I am the first and I am the last* (a). Jesus Christ more frequently, in the revelations of John, exhibits his own glory to the church, by using the same expressions, *I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the ending—Fear not; for I am the first and the last* (b). Another glorious character, which Jehovah applies to himself may be added; *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings* (c). By these very words Jesus plainly represents that knowledge, which all the churches shall have of him; *And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works* (d). If any should ask who is the speaker of these words? the answer will be found in the first words of the epistle, *Unto the angel of the church of Thyatira, write these things saith the Son of God, who hath eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass*. (e) How is it then that these great things, spoken of Jehovah, are applied unto Christ? Upon no other ground can this be done, but because Jesus is truly and properly God.

These texts of holy scripture, which declare the equality and oneness of Jesus Christ with his eternal Father, establish the truth of his proper divinity; of them we shall mention three. The first of them is the words of the Prophet: *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts*. (f) The speaker of these words is Jehovah Sabaoth; and the person spoken of is the Lord Jesus, as appears from his application of them

(a) Isa. xli. 4 — xliv. 6. — xlviii. 12.

(b) Rev. i. 8, 11, 17. — ii. 8. — xxii. 13. (c) Jer. xvii. 10.

(d) Rev. ii. 23. (e) Rev. ii. 18. (f) Zech. xiii. 7.

unto himself; *Then saith Jesus unto them, all ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad* (a). In this oracle of truth, the Lord of hosts represents Jesus Christ, in a threefold view; in his mediatorial character, my shepherd; in his human nature; the man, and in his divine Godhead, that is my fellow. The fellow of any person signifies, both in common and in sacred language, his companion and equal. When Jesus is called the fellow of the Lord of hosts, it points him out to us as his companion and equal. In all eternity he was his companion; for he was by him as one brought up with him, he was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. His equal he also is, being the same with him in nature, perfections, understanding, will, counsels and operation.—The second scripture, on this branch of evidence, is the words of Jesus himself; *I and my Father are one* (b). These words plainly declare the equality and oneness of Jesus Christ with God the Father; and were it not for the wicked perversion of the plainest dictates of scripture, we needed not add a word for explanation. Two considerations, taken from the context, prove it to be a divine and essential oneness betwixt Christ and his Father, that is here intended. In the two foregoing verses, the giving eternal life to believers, and their preservation from perishing, or being plucked out of their blessed state, is, in the same glorious and majestic manner, ascribed unto Christ, as it is unto the Father. Besides, it is evident from the following verses, that the Jews understood him to speak of such an oneness with the Father, as warranted them to charge him with blasphemy; but he, instead of contradicting their opinion, by what he adds rather confirms it, which he could not have done had they mistaken his

(a) Matth xxvi. 31.

(b) John x. 30.

meaning. That expression in the preceding verse, *my Father is greater than all*, is no contradiction to our sense of the text. Our Lord Jesus is not included among the all, than whom the Father is greater. They only comprehend all wicked men and devils, who are both disposed to wish the destruction of believers, and actually endeavour to pluck them from their blessed state. The sense of this expression is the same with that of the apostle; *Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world*(a). Nor are the words of the Lord Christ, *My Father is greater than I* (b), any objection to what has been asserted. Jesus has both a twofold nature, of God and of man; and a twofold character, divine and mediatorial. In the verse where this expression is contained, Jesus speaks once and again of his going to his Father. We ask, as to which of his natures, and in which of his characters did Jesus go unto the Father? The answer must be, as to his human nature, and in his mediatorial character. The obvious conclusion is this, Jesus is speaking of himself in his assumed nature, and office capacity, in which the Father is greater than he; but no such thing is said of him, in his divine nature and character.—The last text we mention, on this point of proof, is the words of Paul, *Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God*. (c) All that is needful to be observed on these words, may be comprehended in one sentence. Since Christ's being in the form of a servant, and made in the likeness of man, mentioned in the following verse, signify that he was really a servant, and actually possessed an human nature; so his being in the form of God, and thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, must signify that he is truly God, and essentially one with him in nature and perfections. If the Lord Jesus Christ is the fellow of the Lord of hosts, one with his eternal

(a) 1 John iv. 4.

(b) John xiv. 28.

(c) Phil. ii. 6.



Father, in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, must he not be a divine person?

The glorious names, which in scripture are bestowed on Christ, confirm the truth of his proper divinity. If divine names are given to Christ, of the divine nature he must be possessed; for as his name is so is he. The names Jehovah, God, and Lord, are, in their most proper meaning, applied unto him. *This is the name whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness (d).* That these words, are applicable to Christ alone will appear, if we consider the context, and the import of the words themselves. The person called by this name is described in the foregoing words, as a righteous branch raised unto David, as a king reigning and prospering, as the saviour of Judah, and as the preparer of a safe dwelling for Israel; all which are applicable to the Redeemer only. The words themselves confirm this. Who has a right to be called the Lord our righteousness but the glorious Messiah who brought in everlasting righteousness, and who is made of God to all his people, righteousness. Our Redeemer is called Jehovah in these words of the prophet, *surely shall one say in the Lord have I righteousness and strength;—In the Lord or Jehovah shall all the seed of Israel be justified (a).* That our mediator is Jehovah, mentioned in these verses, is put beyond a doubt by the apostle's application of the foregoing verse to him in the following manner: *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (b).* Besides the scope of the words themselves point us to Jesus only, as the glorious person whom they describe. From whom is it that believers receive righteousness

(a) Jer. xxiii 6. (b) Isaiah xlv. 24, 25. (c) Phil. ii. 10,

for justification? In whose grace are they called to be strong? And to whose person are they united that they may obtain all those things? Is it not Christ the Lord? He therefore is this Jehovah.—He is also called God. *The word was God.* To the Son he saith, *thy throne, O God.* If it should be said, angels and magistrates are called gods; it is answered they are so called in an improper sense, and something is added to convince mankind that this is the case. When angels are called by this name, they, at the same time, are represented as worshipers; and worshipers of Christ, *worship him all ye gods.* When magistrates receive this name, it is immediately added, *but ye shall die like men.* No degrading expression is used, when this name is applied to Christ; but the very opposite. In the former of these instances Christ is said to be in the beginning with God, and is represented as the creator of all things. In the latter instance, he is said to have an everlasting throne, and a righteous sceptre. But to settle the matter beyond all possibility of dispute, that the name of God is given to Christ in its most proper and highest sense, we observe to you, that he is in scripture called the *great God,—the mighty God,—the true God,—the only wise God,—and God over all blessed for ever, Amen.*—To our glorious Redeemer also, the divine title of Lord is ascribed. As he is not among the gods many, who are found among the creatures; neither is he among the lords many, who are taken from the naturally dependent race. Peter calling him Lord, immediately ascribes omniscience unto him; *Lord, thou knowest all things.* Thomas obtaining a discovery of Jesus, after having been overwhelmed in unbelief, cries out, *My Lord and my God.* He is called *Lord of all, King of kings and Lord of lords, and the Lord God of the holy prophets.* Seeing Jesus Christ is expressly called Jehovah, God and Lord, in the natural and proper

meaning of these names, he must be possessed of the divine Godhead.

The ascribing to Christ perfections, which are peculiar to the divine essence, proves his real divinity. If the essential and incommunicable attributes of the great Jehovah pertain unto him, he must be a divine person. In searching the scriptures we will find that they testify of the Lord Christ, as a person to whom the natural attributes of the Deity belong. Omnipresence is one of those perfections. The words of David confirm this; *whether shall I fly from thy presence (a)*. This perfection belongs unto Christ. His own promise to the church makes this evident; *where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (b)*; and again, *Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world (c)*.—Omniscience is an essential attribute of the Deity; for *the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good (d)*. The church confesses this to be a perfection of her Lord; *shall not God search this out, for he knoweth the secrets of the heart (e)*. The following texts prove that Jesus is omniscient: *Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men. And needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man (f)*. And he said unto him, Lord, *thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee (g)*. And all the churches shall know that *I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts (h)*.—Omnipotence is an essential property of God; for he says of himself, *I am the almighty God (i)*. Your Redeemer, O Christians, is also omnipotent. Of himself he says, *I am the alpha and omega,—the almighty (k)*. Of him the

(a) Psalm cxxxix. 7.

(c) Matth. xxviii. 20.

(e) Psalm xliv. 21,

(g) John xxi. 17.

(i) Gen. xvii. 1.

(b) Matth. xviii. 20.

(d) Prov. xv. 3.

(f) John ii. 24, 25.

(h) Rev. ii. 23.

(k) Rev. i. 8.



apostle testifies, *he shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself* (l). Omnipotent he certainly must be, *for he upholdeth all things by the word of his power* (m).

—Absolute eternity belongs to the nature of God. From a belief of this excellency of her Lord, the church sings, *from everlasting to everlasting thou art God* (n). That this perfection belongs to Christ, the following scripture evidences clearly attest: *The same was in the beginning with God* (o). *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* (p) *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.* (q) *Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting* (r).—Absolute supremacy over all is a natural property of the divine essence; *For he is the blessed and only potentate* (s). This also is ascribed to the Lord Jesus. In the baptist's testimony, concerning him it is asserted; *He that cometh from above is above all,—he that cometh from heaven is above all.* (t) In addition to this, the declaration of Paul deserves our attention; *Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen* (u).—Unchangeableness also belongs to the nature of God; for he claims it to himself; *I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye, sons of Jacob, are not consumed* (x). To Christ this perfection is expressly attributed; *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and forever* (y). Seeing therefore the blessed

(l) Phil. iii. 21.

(n) Psal. xc. 2.

(p) Col. i. 17.

(r) Mic. v. 2.

(t) John iii. 31.

(x) Mal. iii. 6.

(m) Heb. i. 3.

(o) John i. 2.

(q) Prov. viii. 22, 23.

(s) 1 Tim. v. 15.

(u) Rom. ix. 5.

(y) Heb. xiii. 8.

Redeemer possesses those divine perfections, he must also partake of that infinite nature to which they are essential, and be very and eternal God.

The proper divinity of our Redeemer will appear, if we consider the divine works which are performed by him. If works peculiar to the great God are done by Jesus, we must either acknowledge him to be truly God, or admit the absurdity, that the works of God may be accomplished by the creature's power. The divine works of creation, of providence, and of redemption are ascribed to him who is our Mediator, from which we may have our faith, in his real and proper divinity, confirmed.—The work of creating all things is peculiar to God, and by these he distinguishes himself from the idols of the heathen. *The gods that hath not made the heavens, and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion (a).* This is one of the works of Christ the Lord. *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made (b).* For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were made by him and for him. *But unto the Son he saith,—and thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth (c).* The blasphemous fiction, that God almighty employed Christ, as an inferior agent or instrument in the work of creation, is both irrational and antisciptural. It is irrational; for what agency of an inferior could there possibly be, when the Lord spake and it was done, when he commanded and all things were established. It is antisciptural, for the word of God ascribes, in as strong and positive terms, the work of creation to

(a) Jer. x. 11, 12. (b) John i. 3. (c) Col. i. 16.

Christ, as it does unto the Father.—Providence is also a peculiar work of God; *O Lord thou preservest man and beast.* This is another divine work of our Redeemer. The sacred oracles testify of him, *that by him all things consist, and that he upholdeth all things, by the word of his power* (a).—The redemption of sinners, as the scripture testifieth, is a work peculiar to God; *None of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him* (b). This is the work of Jesus. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law* (c). *In whom we have redemption through his blood* (d). *By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us* (e). Behold, O Christians, your Lord Jesus creating all things, upholding all things, and redeeming elect sinners; and in each of these works discern a proof of his divine Godhead.

The ascribing divine worship to the Lord Christ demonstrates his proper divinity. That divine worship is due to him only, who is possessed of the divine nature, is a dictate of reason, and confirmed by divine revelation. These words of Christ contain an eternal truth, *thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve* (f). If it can be made evident, that this worship which is peculiar to God, is required from rational creatures, and paid by them unto our Mediator; the truth of his supreme divinity will certainly be confirmed. Let us now see what light the sacred oracles afford upon this head. Jesus is therein represented as the object of the churches obedience. When sinners are converted they are brought unto his obedience, and the law which they obey, is the law of Christ. The ministers and professors of his religion in every age, complying with his authority, have dispensed and received the ordinances of a preached gos-

(a) Heb. i. 3.

(b) Psal. xlix. 7.

(c) Gal. iii. 13.

(d) Eph. i. 7.

(e) Heb. ix. 12.

(f) Matth. iv. 10.



pel, baptism, and the Lord's supper. With reference unto these institutions his royal orders are, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature (g). Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (h). This do, in remembrance of me (i).* In Christ's instituting these ordinances, the expressions used to the typical Mediator are not found. The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the children of Israel; but they are appointed by him in such a manner, as plainly discovers, that he was not possessed merely of subordinate, but of supreme authority.—He is the object of his peoples religious contemplation in the ordinances of his grace. This was an act of worship given by the church unto the Lord; *we have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple (k).* That this part of sacred homage is due from us to the Lord Jesus, will be evident from the following texts of scripture. *This do in remembrance of me (l). That ye may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge (m). Wherefore holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of your profession, Christ Jesus (n).*—He is the object of the church's faith. *Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. (o) Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved (p).* This faith is fixed on Christ as its divine object, because it is for the enjoyment of eternal salvation. If the man is cursed that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm; surely Jesus must be infinitely more than man, more than a creature; for it is the

(g) Mark xvi. 15.

(h) Matth. xxviii. 19.

(i) Luke xxii. 19.

(k) Psal. xlviii. 9.

(l) Luke xxii. 19.

(m) Eph. iii. 18, 19.

(n) Heb. iii. 1.

(o) John xiv. 1.

(p) Acts xvi. 31.

promise of God concerning him, *in his name shall the Gentiles trust* (d).—He is the object of believers prayers. When Jacob by faith blessed the sons of Joseph, he prayed unto Christ; *the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads* (e). How many of the church's prayers are directed to Christ her beloved, in that most spiritual portion of sacred writing, the song of Solomon? To him the penitent thief upon the cross addressed himself, in the prayer of faith, when he had eternity immediately in his view; *Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom* (f). Another instance of praying to Christ we have in the behaviour of Stephen at his death; of whom the scripture testifieth, that he was *a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost* (g). *And they stoned Stephen*. What was Stephen's exercise when they were employed in this unhallowed action? *Calling upon God*. How did he call on God? *Saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit*. (h) With a prayer to Christ the scripture is concluded; *Amen, even so come Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen* (i).—He is the blessed object of the adoration and praise of angels and redeemed men. This will appear if we attend to their joyful song. *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen* (k). *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying, with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in*

(d) Matth. xii. 21.

(e) Gen. xlviii. 16.

(f) Luke xxiii. 42.

(g) Acts vi. 5.

(h) Acts vii. 59. (i) Rev. xxii. 20, 21. (k) Rev. i. 5, 6.

heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever (a).—He is also worshiped by the church in the ordinances of baptism and ministerial benediction; for Christians are both baptized, and blessed in his name. If in these ordinances, divine worship is paid unto the Father, it is also given to Christ; for there is no difference. Now, Christians, whither it be right in the sight of God to join with holy angels and redeemed sinners, in believing Christ's divinity, and giving him the glory due unto his name; or to say a confederacy with his enemies, who deny his Godhead, and defame his person, judge ye.

The scriptural account of the divine and mediatorial fulness of the Redeemer, presents a most cogent proof of his divinity. Of his divine fulness the scriptural representation is, *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily* (b). Every word in this text deserves a particular consideration. The connection betwixt the truth contained in it, and the apostle's exhortation, in the three foregoing verses, is plainly marked, in the first word of the verse. He had been exhorting believers, who had received Christ Jesus the Lord, to walk in him; to be rooted and built up in him; to be established in the faith; and to beware of suffering themselves, by any means, to be drawn away from him. The truth declared in the verse under our view, contain the reason of these exhortations, which is taken from the excellency of his person. It is as if the apostle had said, Jesus, whom you have received, is no ordinary prophet, or messenger from heaven, but is God as well as man; all these duties you are called to perform, for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. The person

(a) Rev. v. 11, 12, 13. (b) Col. ii. 9.



of whom Paul here speaks is the same that is mentioned in the eight and sixth verses, and may be thus supplied from the latter; for in Jesus Christ the Lord dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. That which is declared to dwell in Christ is all the fulness of the Godhead. The Godhead signifies, the divine being, nature or essence; that which God necessarily is in himself. The fulness of the Godhead must denote the divine nature, and all the perfections and glory which belong unto it. The fulness of the Godhead is perfectly different from the fulness of God, and is of an infinitely higher signification. The fulness of God can signify no more, than that fulness of grace and glory whereof God is the author; and which he bestows upon his people, in this and in the future world. But the fulness of the Godhead or divine essence, is that underived, incommunicable, and necessary fulness, which essentially belongs unto the infinite nature of Jehovah. All the fulness of the Godhead is carrying the expression to its utmost conceivable extent. It is not a part, but the whole of this fulness, of which the apostle is speaking. This fulness dwells in Christ. It does not tabernacle for a time, but it abides and continues with him for ever and ever. It is also added, that it dwells bodily in him. This fulness dwells in him really, not in a figurative manner; and substantially, in opposition to that which is typical. These words warrant the following assertion; all the fulness of Jehovah's eternity, infinity, unchangeableness, glory, blessedness, sovereignty, wisdom, power, justice, faithfulness, love, grace and mercy, essentially belongs unto, and forever abides in Jesus Christ the Lord. If these words do not teach us this glorious truth, it will be impossible to find out any other thing, consistent with the text, which is taught us therein. Stronger or clearer expressions of the supreme divinity of the eternal Father cannot be conceived, than that which is here used and applied unto the Redeemer. Our conclusion from these words cannot be denied,

that since all the fulness of the Godhead, dwelleth bodily in Christ, he must necessarily be possessed of the divine nature.—The scriptural account of the mediatorial fulness of Christ leads our minds to the belief of the same truth. Of our Mediator it is testified, that he is *full of grace and truth, and of his fulness have all we received and grace for grace*(a). *For it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*(b). He is *the head over all things unto the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all*(c). Three things are, in these expressions, presented to our view. The mediatorial fulness of Christ itself. By this we understand, that immeasurable and inconceivable store of new covenant blessings, which is, for the glory of God, and for the benefit of men, deposited in Jesus Christ, as he is the mediator of the better testament. In him is lodged a fulness of spiritual light and life, of justifying merit and righteousness, of sanctifying spirit and influence, of grace and glory.—The manner in which this fulness is in him, it hath pleased the Father that it should be so. Nothing of this kind is said of his divine fulness, which we have already considered; because it is equally necessary and essential, as is the fulness of the Father; but it is surely true of that fulness of Christ which is mediatorial. The establishing of Christ in his mediatory character, and all the blessed effects of this constitution to the children of men, originate from the sovereign will and good pleasure of Jehovah. The treasuring up of this fulness in Jesus Christ, belonging as it does to the scheme of grace, must proceed from the same source. It is therefore by a sovereign, wise and unchangeable appointment of the Father, that all this fulness is in him.—We have also the glorious design of this marvellous dispensation of God, with reference unto his people; that they out of his fulness might receive grace for grace; and that by his fulness, they might be filled all in all.

(a) John i. 14, 16.

(b) Col. i. 29.

(c) Eph. i. 22, 23.

The people of God receive out of his fulness, by the Saviour's communicating it unto them; and they are filled with it by the Redeemer's act of bestowing it upon them. Having purchased for his people all the blessings contained in this fulness, they are all lodged with him, that he, by communicating them to believers in every age, may make his grace sufficient for them, and perfect strength in their weakness. From this account of the mediatorial fulness of Christ, we may argue in the following manner, that it is not possible for us to conceive the Lord Jesus to be capable of receiving, containing, managing and dispensing all this infinite store of spiritual and eternal blessings, which the saints in every age have enjoyed, and which they shall eternally possess, if he is a created, a human person, or naturally inferior to God. Certainly a work of this kind is competent to him only who is God over all and blessed, for ever, Amen. Where would be the display of the wisdom of God in a mystery, the manifold wisdom of God, in committing all the blessings, which he designed for his people in time and through eternity, into the hands of a creature? Where would be the security of the believing seed, for enjoying all this fulness, were it entrusted with one who is an inferior to God? From the consideration of all this infinite charge which is in the hand of Jesus, his divinity clearly appears.

The mediatorial actions of Jesus Christ prove the divinity of his person; of these we shall mention only a few. Christ's sending the Spirit unto the church, is a clear proof of his divinity. Our Mediator being ascended into heaven, sends, equally with the Father, the Spirit of God to perform his work in the salvation of sinners. *But when the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father (a). But if I depart I will send him unto you (b).* From what has been already hinted in the first Section, and from what is

(a) John xv. 26.

(b) John xvi. 7.



afterwards said in section sixth, it is clearly proved that the Spirit of God is a divine person. Now if our glorious Mediator sends him unto his people, he must also be a divine person. It is not competent unto one who is a creature to send the divine Spirit, to give him a commission, and appoint unto him his work. Since Jesus our Redeemer does all this with respect to the Spirit, his divinity must be indisputably evident.—He also works by the Spirit. As the Father's working by the Son and the Holy Ghost is a proof of his divinity; so the Son's working by the Holy Spirit is an equally clear confirmation of the divinity of his person. That this is true of the Son of God is asserted in the following words; *Until the day in which he was taken up, after he had through the Holy Ghost given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen (a).*—The miraculous works recorded in the New Testament prove his divinity. These are of two kinds; the miracles wrought by himself, and those which were done by his apostles. Jesus performed his miraculous works in such a way, as is competent to none inferior to God. They were wrought by his own power, done in his own name, and accomplished in the most solemn and majestic manner. To the leper he said, I will be thou clean; to Lazarus he cried, Lazarus come forth; to Jarius's daughter he said, Maid arise; and to those who were possessed with the devil he uttered his divine command, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. The miracles done by the apostles of Christ may be adduced as a proof of his divinity; for they were all wrought in his name. When Peter and John cured the lame man, the words they used are remarkable; *In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk (b).* Is it possible that miracles can be wrought in the name, and by the power of a creature? Beyond all contradiction the divinity of Christ is most

(a) Acts i. 2.

(b) Acts ii. 6.

certainly confirmed, by his own miracles, and those of his apostles.—Our Redeemer's bearing the sins of his people, which are infinite both in their number and intrinsic evil; his enduring at once and entirely exhausting the infinite wrath of God; and his giving an infinite satisfaction for his peoples sin, clearly confirm the divinity of his person. That he has done this, is evident from Daniel's description of his work, which is *to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness* (b). None of those things are in the power of the creature. They are competent to him only, who is truly a divine person. To this argument it is objected, that Jesus in this work had the almighty support of his Father, and therefore he might go through with it, tho', in his personality and nature, he be inferior to God. To this objection some have answered, that Jesus was left entirely to himself in this work, and shared not of his Father's support. This method of replying, to say no worse of it, is the effect of a very culpable inattention. It is contrary to the words of God concerning him, *My servant whom I uphold, I will hold thy hand and will keep thee*; contrary to Christ's own account of his situation when bearing divine wrath, *I am not alone for the Father is with me*; and contrary to the necessary connection that is among the divine persons, so that none of them can be employed in any work about the creatures, without the concurrence of the other two. The proper answer to the objection is as follows: It is not competent even to almighty power to make a finite person bear the infinite weight of sin, give infinite satisfaction for it, and sustain at once and remove infinite wrath. This is a natural impossibility, and includes a plain contradiction. For accomplishing things of this kind divine power has no concern, and never was exercised. The sup-

(b) Dan. ix. 24.

ports of the almighty power and grace of God can never make the obedience of a creature infinitely meritorious, or his sufferings infinitely satisfactory; this can proceed from the infinite dignity of the person obeying and suffering, and that alone — His quickening sinners confirms this truth. Of this we have an account in his own words, *for as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live (c).* These words present to our view the following properties of his quickening work. It is of the same nature with the Father's quickening; the power of Christ is the cause; the sovereign will of Christ is the rule; it is by hearing his divine voice that they live; and this work is perpetually going on in the world below; all of which abundantly confirm his divinity. — Our Mediator is the foundation and head of the church, from which his divinity is evident. *For other foundations can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus (d).* And says the same apostle, *he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence (e).* How is it possible to conceive, that the weight of the eternal salvation of millions of the fallen family of Adam, should be rested upon a creature as its foundation? And how can it be imagined, that a creature can be the quickening, directing, governing, and beautifying head of the myriads of holy believers, of whom the church of God is composed? As these suppositions are impossible, he who is the head and foundation of the church must be the true and eternal God. — His mediatorial power over all creatures proves his divinity. *All things are*

(c) John v. 21, 25.

(d) 1 Cor. iii. 11.

(e) Col. i. 18.



“ sion of infidels, destroy the unity of the Godhead,  
 “ distribute the perfections of God amongst other,  
 “ and inferior beings, and rob him of his peculiar  
 “ Honour and glory, which he has declared he will not  
 “ give to another (a).

The doctrine of the holy scriptures, which has been received and retained by the Christian church, is expressed in the following proposition: “ The scriptures manifest, that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father, ascribing unto them such names, offices, works, and worship as are proper to God only (b). The truth of this proposition, so far as it asserts the divinity of the Son of God, having been already established; we shall now from scripture confirm it, as it declares the perfect, divine equality of the Holy Ghost with the Father and Son.

The Holy Spirit is mentioned among divine persons, in the same manner with them, and without any difference at all from them, by which his proper divinity is manifest. *Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (c).* *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen (d).* *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one (e).* That the Father is a divine person is granted by all, that the Son is a divine person has been formerly proved, and since the Spirit is mentioned in these texts in the same manner as they are, without any hint of his inferiority to them, or mark of his dependence upon them, he must be considered as a divine person. From the first of these texts it is evident that Christians are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost as well as in

(a) The holy scriptures the only rule of faith, p. 5.

(b) Larger catechism, quest. 11.

(c) *Match. xxviii. 19.*

(d) *2 Cor. xiii. 14.*

(e) *1 John v. 7.*

the name of the Father and Son. He has the same connection with the ordinance of baptism, and relation to the persons baptized as the other two. Evident it is from the second text that the blessing comes to the church from the Holy Spirit, as well as from the Father and Christ. And in the last the witnessing of the Spirit in heaven is mentioned, in the same way with that of the Father and the Word. Besides, these three are said to be one, one in nature and essence. What conclusion does all this warrant us to form? Certainly this, that the Spirit, being thus mentioned with divine persons, is himself a divine person, is possessed of the divine nature, and is God equal with the Father and Son.

Some things which are said of the true God in the Old Testament, being applied to the Spirit in the New, establish the truth of his proper divinity. For the confirmation of your faith in this particular, Christian friends, we shall set before you six instances of this. The first may be taken from what is said of the behaviour of the children of Israel at the waters of strife. *And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord (a), or Jehovah.* This matter is amplified by the Psalmist, speaking of him whom he calls Jehovah our God, he says, *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, and as in the day of the temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, and proved me, and saw my works (b).* Who is this Jehovah whom Israel tempted in the wilderness, and was the speaker of these words? Let the inspired apostle answer the question. *Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, to day if ye will hear his voice; harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, the Holy Ghost, proved me, and*

(a) Exod. xvii. 7.

(b) Psal. xcvi. 7, 8, 9.

*saw my works (c).*—Our second instance is the following. *And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail upon his face. But when Moses went in before the Lord, or Jehovah, to speak with him, he took the vail off until he came out (d).* Let us now see what use the same infallible interpreter of scripture makes of this portion of sacred writing. *But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their hearts. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.* Now the Lord is that Spirit (e). The great Jehovah, before whose presence Moses unveiled himself, and to whom Israel must turn before the vail can be taken from their hearts, is here expressly declared to be the Spirit, and the Spirit of the Lord.—The third instance we mention is taken from the scriptural account of the fast of general expiation, which was observed by the antient church on the tenth day of the seventh month. *And the Lord, or Jehovah, said unto Moses speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat which is upon the ark; that he die not (f).* After he had given, through the whole of the chapter, a particular account of the solemn rites, which were to be performed on the great day of atonement, he concludes in the following words; *And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year. And he did as the Lord, or Jehovah, commanded Moses (g).* Who was the author of this institution? who spake to Moses on this occasion? The apostle declares it was the Holy Ghost. *But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way unto the holi-*

(c) Heb. iii 7, 8, 9.

(d) Exod. xxxiv. 33, 34.

(e) 2 Cor. iii. 15, 16, 17. (f) Lev. xv i. 2.

(g) Lev. xvi. 34.



*est of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing (b).—*The next instance may be taken from the scriptural account of the inspiration of the prophets. This is the work of God. *And he said, Hear now my words: if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord, or Jehovah, will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream (c).* That this Jehovah who inspired the prophets is the Holy Ghost, the words of Peter certainly affirm. *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holymen of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (d).*—Another instance is as follows. *Also I heard the voice of the Lord, or Jehovah, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I here am I, send me. And he said go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not (e).* Who is this Jehovah, whose voice Isaiah heard, and from whom he received both his commission and message? The apostle's words decide the point. *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias unto our fathers, saying, go unto this people, and say, hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand (f).*—The last instance we mention relates to the new covenant, which the Lord makes with the house of Israel. *Behold, the day's come, saith the Lord or Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah (g).* That this Jehovah, the covenant God of Israel, is the Holy Ghost, the words of Paul constrain us to believe. *The Holy Ghost is also a witness unto us: for after that he the Holy Ghost had said before. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them (h).* From all these instances, it is evident, that

(b) Heb. ix. 7, 8.

(c) Num. xii. 6.

(d) 2 Peter i. 21.

(e) Isa. vi. 8, 9.

(f) Acts xx. 25, 26.

(g) Jer. xxxi. 31.

(h) Heb. x. 15, 16.

he who is called Jehovah in the scriptures quoted from the Old Testament, is called the Holy Ghost, in those mentioned from the New; the Holy Ghost is, therefore, God equal with the Father and Son.

Such divine names are bestowed upon the Spirit, as confirm his proper divinity. The name Jehovah is given to the true God, and to him only. From all the instances mentioned in the foregoing argument, we may see that this name is given to the Holy Spirit, which proves his divinity.—The names the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Lord, and the Spirit of the Lord God also confirm this truth. That those names establish his divinity is clear from this very plain reason, that he must be of the same nature with that glorious one, whose spirit he is. The spirit of an angel is an angelic spirit; the spirit of a man is an human spirit; and therefore the Spirit of Jehovah must be a divine Spirit.—The Holy Ghost is called God. Peter's words to Ananias and Sapphira, settle this point beyond all reasonable contradiction. *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost. Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. How is it that ye have agreed together, to tempt the Spirit of the Lord (a).* The Holy Ghost is in these words expressly called God. In order to represent the aggravation of their iniquity, they are told that in their falsifying unto the Holy Ghost, they had not lied unto men, but unto God. If the Holy Spirit is not the person who is here called God, the apostle should have said, thou hast not lied unto men, nor unto the Holy Ghost, but unto God; but no such words having been uttered by him, we are obliged to believe that the Holy Ghost is God. In its proper and highest meaning, the name God is given to the Spirit; because he is both represented as the object against whom the sin was committed, and is opposed unto and exalted above all creatures, thou

(a) Acts v. 3, 4, 9.

hast not lied unto men, but unto God. This name is also bestowed upon the Spirit in the following words of Paul; *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you* (b). Believers have a divine inhabitant in them, which makes them a temple. Who is this? It is the Spirit of God, who is God. The apostle, speaking again on the same subject, uses the following expression, *Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost* (c). He who is in the foregoing words called God, is in this text called the Holy Ghost; the Holy Ghost therefore is God. As the inhabitation of the Spirit constitutes the creature, in whom he resides, a temple, this name must be applied to him in its most exalted signification.—The Spirit is also called Lord. *Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* (d). Or as by the Lord the Spirit. Since these divine names are given to the Spirit, we may, with an assured faith, believe that he is possessed of the divine nature.

The ascribing to the Spirit of God the incommunicable perfections of Jehovah, proves his supreme divinity. That person to whom these attributes of God belong, we may acknowledge to be God, and worship and glorify him accordingly. We are now to mention some of these perfections, and to prove that they are, in the holy scriptures, ascribed unto the Spirit of God. Omnipresence is an essential perfection of Jehovah, which belongs unto the Spirit. Of the truth of this, the adoring words of the Psalmist are a confirmation. *Whether shall I go from thy Spirit* (a)? The Spirit is in this context affirmed to be every where present, in

(b) 1 Cor. iii. 16.

(c) 1 Cor. vi. 19.

(d) 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18.

(e) Psalm cxxxix. 7.



heaven, on earth, and in hell. Impossible it is for the creature to go where he is not. What can be a more plain description of the immensity of any object than this? The Spirit's omnipresence is confirmed from his being in heaven and on earth at the same time. He is represented as one of the witnesses who bear record in heaven. In every moment of time, the members of the church are warranted to consider and believe him to be in heaven, bearing record to the truth of the gospel report. By the same authority the children of men are informed, that the Spirit dwells with the church upon earth, and abides with them forever. If the holy scriptures assure us that the Spirit is in heaven and on earth through all time, he must be the omnipresent God. Of this divine person it is said, *he is sent forth into all the earth* (b). He is not in one place of the world only, but is in all the earth at the same time. That he is omnipresent is obvious from his inhabitation of all believers. The seven spirits of God who are before the throne, and who are at the same time, sent forth into all the earth, even the Holy Ghost in his manifold operations, dwells in the heart of every real saint. The spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead dwells in all believers in every age, and in all places of the world where they reside, and he of whom this is affirmed must be the omnipresent Jehovah.— Omniscience or infinite knowledge is a perfection of the Spirit of God. By the prophets he foretold contingent futurities, and thereby manifested himself to be that God, who knows the end from the beginning. Of the antient prophets we have the following account, *Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, testifying before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow* (c). The same work is ascribed unto the Spirit in the writings of the New Testament. To old Simeon, it

(b) Rev. v. 6.

(c) 1 Pet. i. 11.

was revealed by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ (d). Agabus signified by the Spirit that there should be a great dearth throughout all the world (e). The same prophet, after he had bound his hands and feet with Paul's girdle, said, *Thus saith the Holy Ghost, - so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that oweth this girdle* (f). Paul, when speaking of the apostacy of aftertimes, says, *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils* (g). This work of the Spirit clearly demonstrates that he possesses omniscient knowledge. This will be further evident if we consider the words of Paul, *For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God* (h). The peculiar province of the omniscient God it is to search all things, but this is ascribed unto the Spirit. He searcheth all things belonging unto the creature; their hearts and practice, there state and frame. He searcheth all things which belong unto God, yea the deep things of God. That question, *Canst thou by searching find out God, canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection* (i)? Is inapplicable unto the Spirit; for he searcheth the deep things of God. By all God's rational offspring, from the man who possesses the lowest measure of intelligence in this world, to the most enlightened archangel that stands before the throne, this question must be answered in the negative. *Jehovah's thoughts are very deep* (k). A view of this made the apostle in raptures exclaim, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and*

(d) Luke ii. 26.

(e) Acts xi. 28.

(f) Acts xxi. 11.

(g) 1 Tim. iv. 1.

(h) 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. (i) Job xi. 7.

(k) Psal. xcii. 5.

*knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out (d).* With all these unsearchable mysteries, both of the divine nature and will, the Spirit has an infinite and most perfect acquaintance, and therefore must be the omniscient God. This truth is farther established in the words, as they declare that the Spirit of God knoweth the things of God, as the spirit of a man knoweth the things of a man. As the spirit of a man has a perfect human knowledge of the things of a man; the Spirit of God must have a perfect divine acquaintance with the things of God. Besides, if we do not understand the words in this sense, they declare a falsehood. There are others besides the Spirit of God who search and know the things of God in a finite degree. The angels of God have much knowledge of the things of God, and the apostles of Christ had high illumination concerning them; if therefore the Spirit's searching into and knowledge of the deep things of God is not infinite, there is no truth in the apostle's declaration. The Spirit has no counsellor, from which his omniscient knowledge is evident. *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him. With whom took he counsel (e).* If the Spirit has no counsellor, he must have in himself all the treasures of infinite wisdom and knowledge; and therefore he is the omniscient God.—Omnipotence is ascribed unto the Spirit. The works he performs in creation, providence and grace clearly prove that this perfection belongs to him. As these may be considered afterwards we shall not at present mention them.—Eternity is also a perfection of the Spirit. *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God (f).* It was through

(d) Rom. xi. 33.

(e) Isa. xl. 13.

(f) Heb. ix. 14.



the powerful influence of the Spirit upon Christ's human nature, that he offered himself to God a sacrifice for our sins. This Spirit is in the most emphatical manner called the eternal Spirit; an attribute which, though angels and the souls of men are immortal, is never applied unto them, and must signify the necessary eternity of the Spirit of God. The Spirit, as well as the Word, was in the beginning with God, for, in the first creation, he moved upon the face of the waters. Besides, the eternity of the Spirit is evident from his relation to God, as Jehovah could never be without his Spirit.—To the Spirit the attribute of unchangeableness belongs: four times in one paragraph the apostle calls him the same Spirit; and gives him this emphatical name, *the one and the self same Spirit* (a). These incommunicable perfections of God being attributed unto the Spirit, we may warrantably conclude that he is God equal with the Father and Son.

The proper divinity of the Holy Ghost may be proved, from that worship which is given unto him by the church and people of God. He is the object of the church's worship in administering and receiving the ordinance of baptism. When this solemn and significant ordinance is dispensed to the children of men, they are baptized by Christ's command *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* (b). Baptism is a sign representing to the faith of Christians, a seal for confirming, and a mean of applying to the members of the church the covenant of grace and all its blessings. In this ordinance Christians come under solemn obligations to their covenant God, in fulfilling of which, through all the periods of their life, they are to be employed. They are baptized by the authority, and for the advancement of the honour of their covenant God. In baptism

(a) 1 Cor. xii. 11.

(b) Matth. xxvii. 19.

they are devoted to the worship, engaged to the service, and obliged to the profession of his holy religion. But who is the covenant God of the church? How is he described? Not by his essential names Jehovah, God or Lord; but in the words of institution the personal names of the adorable three are distinctly marked, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, one in nature, and three in personality. This is the covenant God of Christians. The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are in this ordinance the object of the church's adoration. By the authority, and to the honour of the Holy Spirit, Christians are baptized, as well as of the Father and Son. In this ordinance they are devoted to the worship, engaged to the service, and obliged to the profession of the Holy Ghost, as well as the other two. All the worship that it is possible for Christians to give unto a divine person, is here bestowed by them upon the Holy Ghost, equally with the Father and Son; and how unreasonable must it be to entertain a doubt of his proper divinity?—The Spirit of God is worshiped by the church in the ministerial benediction, which is pronounced upon them in the following words, *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen* (a). The Spirit of God in this ordinance is worshiped by the church in the same manner with the Father and Son. Every person must see that the Spirit is here viewed as the source of the church's felicity, as well as the other divine persons. To him, equally with the rest, the church applies for the blessing. In him they exercise faith for the blessing, as they exercise that grace upon God and Christ. In his name, as well as the other two, the ministers of Christ pronounce the blessing upon Christians, and wish them to be blessed. He is therefore the object of divine worship, and consequently must

(a) 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

be God. What an unequal yoking of persons would there be in this divine ordinance, and in baptism, were the Spirit an inferior person? since they are thus joined as the one object of worship, they must be the one only living and true God.—The Spirit is the object of the church's prayer. An instance of this we have in the words of the spouse, *Awake, O north wind, and come thou south, blow upon my garden that the spices thereof may flow out* (b). This is certainly a prayer of the church, which may be used by Christians in every age. Which of the persons of the Trinity is here addressed? Not the Father, he never receives this designation. Not the Son, he is addressed in the end of the verse. It is therefore the Holy Spirit who in this manner may be prayed unto by believers till the end of time. In declaring the message of God's grace to men, the ministers of the gospel, after the example and in the words of Ezekiel, may address the Spirit, saying, *Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live* (c). The apostle John, in his devote and pious address to the throne of grace in behalf of Christians, prays to the Spirit as well as to the Father and Christ; *Grace be to you and peace from—the seven spirits which are before his throne* (d). As the Spirit of God is the object of the worship and adoration of Christians, he certainly is possessed of the divine nature.

From the concern which the Spirit of God has with the sins of the children of men, his divinity may be demonstrated. God is the object against whom sin is committed; *against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight* (e). The Holy Ghost is the object who is dishonoured, offended, and provoked by the sins of men; and therefore he is God. This is evident from the charge which the Lord brings

(b) Song iv. 16.

(c) Ezek. xxxvii. 9.

(d) Rev. i. 4.

(e) Psalm li. 4.



against his antient people, *But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them* (a). Being charged with the sin of rebellion in general, the particular instance of it which is given, is their vexing his Holy Spirit. The criminality and aggravation of this sin against the Spirit, appears in the punishment thereof, he became an enemy to them, and fought against them. Perfectly agreeable to this, is the charge brought against the Jews in his day, by the martyr Stephen; *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye* (b). They are represented as being stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears. Wherein did they discover this? It was by their sinning against the Spirit of God, ye do alway resist the Holy Ghost. With these the words of Paul perfectly correspond, when he is describing the aggravated condemnation of gospel despisers, who shall be subjected to a much sorer punishment than those who transgressed Moses law. What is the reason of this? One part of their criminality is stated in the following words, *and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace* (c). The heart enmity which they have discovered against God, and the Son of God, is despite unto the Spirit of grace. The words of the prophet, martyr, and apostle mentioned above, are, by the Redeemer himself, greatly corroborated, and the argument taken from them is clearly confirmed. *Wherefore, I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the son of man it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come* (d). A particular

(a) Isa. lxiii. 10.

(b) Acts vii. 51.

(c) Heb. x. 29.

(d) Matth. xii 31, 32.

sin, attended with peculiar aggravations, is mentioned in these words. The object against whom this sin is committed is the Spirit of God; for it is called blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and speaking against him. The dreadful nature of this evil is also marked, it is irremissible both in this life and in that which is to come. If the Holy Spirit of God is the object against whom the unpardonable sin is committed, by the children of men, he must be God equal with the Father and Son. A very strange idea must be suggested to our minds, by these words of Christ, if the Spirit is considered either as a power and influence of God, or a person inferior to the Father and Son. Because he is the glorious person who is dishonoured, offended and provoked by the creature's wickedness, we are warranted to consider him to be that God who is the author of the law, who has a right to the obedience of men, and who will eternally punish them for their iniquity.

The Spirit's concern in the works of creation and providence proves his proper divinity. That he is the God who made and preserves all things, will be evident from four texts, upon each of the branches of this proof. The inspired account of the creation represents, that *the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters* (a). The person here mentioned is the Spirit of God; and his operation is also stated, he moved upon the face of the waters. By his divine and personal agency, he put all the natural qualities, virtue and strength into the animate and inanimate, rational and irrational creatures of God, of which they are possessed. To the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit, the very second sentence, contained in divine revelation, bears a clear and ample testimony. The sacred record further bears, that *by his Spirit he garnished the heavens* (b). Some have taken occasion from

(a) Gen. i. 2.

(b) Job xxvi. 13.

these words to imagine, that the Almighty employed the Spirit in the work of creation, only as an inferior agent. Scripture and reason concur in declaring this to be impossible. From the former of these sources of information we are told, that *Jehovah stretched forth the heavens alone, and spread abroad the earth by himself (c)*, and if so the admissibility of the agency of an inferior is flatly contradicted. The Lord's question to Job, *where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth (d)?* plainly imports that no person inferior to himself, had any hand in creating all things. The reason of man also plainly discerns the works of creation to be of such a nature, as to exclude entirely all inferior agency in their production. The Spirit is that Jehovah who garnished the heavens, stretched them forth, and spread abroad the earth. Elishu speaks of the Spirit's work in his creation, which is true also of the formation of all others, in terms of the most absolute and proper signification; *The Spirit of God hath made me (e)*. If it is asked, who is the person that formed and fashioned Elishu and all the children of men? those words warrant us to reply it is the Spirit of God. He is therefore our almighty creator. Another proof of this necessary truth we have in the following words, *Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him (f)?* From the former of these verses we may be assured, that the person spoken of therein is the great Jehovah, the creator of all things; and from the latter verse we may be equally certain that it is the Spirit of God who is there described. To him, equally with the Father and Son, pertains

(c) Isa. xliv. 24. (d) Job xxxviii. 4.

(e) Job xxxiii. 4. (f) Isa. xl. 12, 13.



the work of creating all things.—The Holy Ghost is also the God of providence. This truth is attested by the following portions of scripture. *Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his Spirit it hath gathered them* (a). Some of the creatures of God are mentioned in the context, and what is said of them may justly be said of all the rest. The truth asserted here is that in the holy providence of God all creatures shall be brought into and kept in their existence, no one of these shall fail, none shall want his mate. How is this to be accomplished? it is by the sovereign and unchangeable appointment of God, my mouth it hath commanded. But how is this decree or command of God fulfilled? By the personal agency and almighty influence of the Spirit of God, my Spirit it hath gathered them. That the Spirit is the God of providence will appear from the words of the Psalmist, *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth* (b). By the continual and almighty operation of the Holy Spirit, sent forth by God the Father, and proceeding from him, all creatures here below of every kind have their natural qualities, virtue and strength preserved and increased. The visions of the prophet Ezekiel represent the Spirit to be the God of providence. *When the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; and when the living creatures were lift up from the earth the wheels were lift up. Whithersoever the Spirit was to go they went;—for the Spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels* (c). This prophetic vision, it is generally agreed, represents the conduct of providence towards the children of men in general, and the church of God in particular. The wheels in this vision signify the majestic, wise, awful, and incontro-

(a) Isa. xxxiv. 16. (b) Psalm civ. 30.

(c) Ezek. i. 19, 20.

lible dispensations of God towards men. The living creatures are justly considered to represent the holy angels, whose ministry is employed in the work of providence. By whose powerful and personal agency are all the motions of these wheels, and ministry of the living creatures influenced, directed and managed? It is the Spirit of God, whithersoever the Spirit was to go they went. He therefore has a divine concern in the work of providence. That the Spirit is the God of providence will appear, if we consider, that his influence is the cause of that decay and death wherewith the creatures are visited according as their different natures are capable thereof. *The voice said cry; and he said, what shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass (a).* These words contain a clear proof of the Spirit's divine concern in the work of providence. Being the author of all their prosperity, he is also the cause of their decay. Seeing the Lord the Spirit has such a concern in the works of creation and providence, as would be the height of blasphemy to ascribe to any creature, he must be possessed of the divine nature.

The Spirit's works upon our glorious Mediator confirm the truth of his proper divinity; a few of which may be very shortly mentioned. By his personal operation, the holy human nature of Christ was formed, in the womb of the virgin. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (b).* Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: *When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy*

(a) Isaiah xl. 6, 7.

(b) Luke i. 35.

*Ghost (b).* And says the angel to Joseph, *Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost (c).* In antient prophecy Jehovah declared, that he would create *a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man (d).* Since the Holy Ghost hath, by forming Christ's human nature in the virgin's womb, created this new-thing in the earth, he must be a divine person.—The Spirit filled the human nature of Jesus with an immeasurable store of divine gifts and graces. *And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of council and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord (e).* Accomplished this promise was to the blessed Jesus, for at his baptism John testifies, *I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him (f).* And afterwards he declares to his disciples that, *God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him (g).* The human nature of Christ being filled with all gifts and graces, through the operation of the Spirit, what doubt of his divinity can remain upon our minds?—The Spirit of God had also a special and divine agency upon Christ's human nature, in his preaching the gospel, and working miracles. *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit unto Galilee,—and he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all (h).* Jesus conducted the grand work of preaching the everlasting gospel, under the influence of the Spirit of God. He also wrought miracles by the same influence. *But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you (i).* As the Spirit of God directed and supported Christ, in his assumed nature, when preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and performing miracles, he

(b) Matth. i. 18.

(c) Matth. i. 20.

(d) Jer. xxxi. 22.

(e) Isa. xi. 2.

(f) John i. 32.

(g) John iii. 34.

(h) Luke iv. 14, 15.

(i) Matth. xii. 28.



surely must be divine.—The Spirit of God performed a peculiar work upon our glorious High Priest, when he offered himself a sacrifice to God, for the expiation of our iniquity. Evident this is from the words of the apostle, *who by the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God* (a). By a divine and supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit on Christ's human nature, did he as our High Priest, give himself a ransom for all; and certainly he must be a divine person.—The Spirit also had a special agency in Christ's resurrection. Two expressions of Paul will confirm this truth, *And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead* (b). *God was manifest in the flesh, and justified by the Spirit* (c). By the almighty operation of the Spirit, was Christ's human nature quickened and raised from the state of the dead. Each of these divine works, performed by the Spirit, is a confirming testimony unto his divinity.

The work of the Spirit, about the church and her general concerns, proves the truth of his proper divinity. He has given the church divine revelation. In declaring the will of God to men, *holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost* (d). All that is contained in divine revelation is what *the Spirit saith unto the churches* (e). That he is the author and giver of divine revelation is evident from what Paul declares, *Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit* (f).—The Spirit sends the ministers of the gospel unto their work. Accordingly Isaiah says of himself, *The Lord and his Spirit hath sent me* (g). An instance of his exercising this

(a) Heb. ix. 14.

(b) Rom. i. 4.

(c) 1 Tim. iii. 16.

(d) 1 Pet. i. 21.

(e) Rev. ii. 7.

(f) Eph. iii. 5.

(g) Isa. xlviii. 16.

supreme power we have in that remarkable portion of holy writing which follows. *As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have appointed them. So they being sent forth of the Holy Ghost departed unto Selucia (e).* From these scriptures it is abundantly evident, that the Holy Spirit of God takes some of the children of men, qualifies them with gifts and grace, appoints for them their work in the church, and sends them to the performance thereof.—The Spirit fixes the ministers of the church, and gives them their particular charge. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (f).*—The Spirit also blesses the ordinances of divine grace unto the souls of men, and makes the word efficacious for their salvation. *And my speech, and my preaching, was not with enticing words of mens wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power (g).* *For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance (h).*—It is the work of the Holy Ghost powerfully to oppose, and effectually to withstand the church's enemies. *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him (i).* The church is like to be overwhelmed by the power of her enemies, they come in like a flood. By whom is this flood driven back and turned away? It is by the Spirit of the Lord.—Raising the church from a low and distressed condition, unto a flourishing and prosperous state is the work of the Spirit of God. *This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts (k).* The same truth is confirmed from the account which

(e) Acts xiii. 2. 4.

(g) 1 Cor. 2. 4.

(i) Isa. lix. 19.

(f) chap. xx. 28.

(h) 1 Theff. i. 5.

(k) Zech. iv. 6.

we have of the resurrection of the church from her slain state, to which she is brought by her antichristian enemies. *And after three days and a half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them; and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them that saw them* (a). Now seeing such great and glorious works are performed by the Spirit for the church of God, which would be absurd and wicked in the highest degree to apply unto any other than one who is God, we must assuredly conclude that the Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and Son.

The Spirit's saving work upon the souls of men demonstrates the truth of his divinity. He is the efficient cause of all evangelic convictions of sin, of which believers are the subjects. Our Saviour declares concerning him, *And when he is come he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment* (b). The apostle calls him, *the Spirit of bondage unto fear* (c). All these gracious actings of the believing soul, in spiritually discerning the evil nature of sin, in godly sorrow and brokenness of heart on account thereof, and in turning from the love and practice of it, unto the love and service of the Lord, are found in the hearts of men only in consequence of the Spirit's working in them, by his almighty power; and how can these things be if he is a created person.—The regeneration of the souls of men is also the work of the Spirit. This work consists in that remarkable change which is wrought upon the human mind, whereby sinners are created again in Christ Jesus, are quickened together with Christ, and become new creatures. Our Saviour ascribes this work unto the Holy Spirit, *Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The wind bloweth where it listeth—so is every one that is born of the*

(a) Rev. xi. 11.

(b) John xvi. 8.

(c) Rom. viii. 15.



*Spirit (c)*. This great new covenant blessing is called by an inspired apostle, *The washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost (d)*.—The precious privilege of sanctification is bestowed on believers by the same Spirit. The record of heaven, for the confirmation of this, is expressed in the following words; *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth (e)*. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience (f)*.—Spiritual strength is conveyed to believers through the Spirit's powerful operation upon their souls. Accordingly an apostle prays, *That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner-man (g)*. All that moral and spiritual ability, whereby believers are enabled to perform all parts of duty, is the gift of the Spirit to them.—By the Spirit's agency, the bodies of the saints shall be raised from the dead. *But if the Spirit of him, that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you (h)*.—He is also the author and giver of glory to the nations of them that are saved. *By him believers are changed into the same image from glory to glory (i)*, and he is called *The Spirit of glory (k)*. All these divine and saving works being performed by the Spirit of God, in favours of those who are the redeemed of the Lord, he must have an arm that is full of almighty power, and be, in the highest sense of the word, God equal with the Father and Son.

In these few particulars we have set before you,

(c) John iii. 5. 8.

(d) Tit. iii. 5.

(e) 2 Theff. ii. 13.

(f) 1 Pet. i. 3.

(g) Eph. iii. 16.

(h) Rom. viii. 11.

(i) 2 Cor. iii. 18.

(k) 1 Pet. iv. 14.

dear friends and brethren, a short view of some of the scriptural arguments, which confirm the proper divinity of the Spirit of the Lord God. While many arise contradicting and blaspheming the proper divinity of the Holy Spirit, and while we and others\* would desire to maintain this article of faith, judge ye betwixt us, and determine for yourselves upon which side divine truth is to be found. Take heed of the common temptation, whereby many souls are ruined, that this is a matter of small importance, and a point of mere speculation. So far is this from being true, that the right knowledge of the divine nature, and the way of our salvation by the grace of God, can never be attained, without the belief of this truth. While you weigh with Christian candour and impartiality, the arguments which have been adduced upon this head, look to God for the influence of the Spirit of truth, to guide you into all truth, and being thus exercised, you will soon comfortably know that there is an Holy Ghost, and that he is God equal with the Father and Son.

\* The presbytery have seen with pleasure, and perused with profit the publications which have appeared, both from religious denominations, and individuals, against the Socinian doctrines, that have lately received so much countenance in the land. When they now appear to shew their opinion, it is not to be understood as if they regarded that which has already been said upon the subject, to be insufficient for the defence of truth. But they now appear in order to discharge their duty also to God, and to the generation; to manifest their hearty concurrence with others in contending for the faith; and to testify their adherence to the doctrines of the scriptures, which are laid down in the standards of the church of Scotland.

## SECTION VII.

OF THE SPIRIT'S EFFICACIOUS AND INVINCIBLE  
OPERATION ON THE SOULS OF MEN.

**A**S Socinians and Unitarians deny the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, so they set themselves against, grievously misrepresent, and in effect nullify his powerful work on the souls of men for their salvation. As the doctrines contained in the two foregoing sections are of infinite importance to professed Christians; so that article of truth to which we would now turn your attention, Christian brethren, is of an equally momentous nature. That you may have a clear view of the belief of the erroneous, and of the faith of the church upon this article, we submit to your consideration the following quotations.

Dr. M'Gill's opinion on this point is as follows:  
 " God hath already saved you, so to speak, as far as  
 " it depends on him; I mean, as far as it can be  
 " done in a moral way, that is, consistently with your  
 " freedom of will, and with the nature of that holiness  
 " and happiness to which he desires to bring you (a)."  
 " Can you resist any longer the Father of your spi-  
 " rits, after he hath employed such expensive means  
 " to reclaim you? Will you continue to spurn his  
 " goodness, and reject all his gracious councils  
 " in your favour? Yes, you may do it after all;  
 " for he will not obtrude his benefits upon you,  
 " or any one, against your own deliberate con-  
 " sent (b)." " His power is able to raise me up, if  
 " I be willing, even from the deplorable weakness to

(a) Practical essay, page 404. (b) Practical essay, p 405.



“ which my own sin and folly, still more than a degenerate nature, has reduced me (a).” “ So that if the matter do not stick at us, our sins are effectually carried off by his crucified body (b).” Similar sentiments are entertained and expressed by Dr. Dalrymple “ to give his life a ransom for many,” “ not only for the Jews but for all mankind, if they are not a wanting to themselves (c).” “ Were the means made use of by Christ to enlighten, reform, and create mankind to good works sufficient? yes; when they were properly entertained (d).” By the doctrine contained in these few sentences, the glory of the sinner’s salvation is taken from the grace of God, and is given to his own free will; the honour of applying to the children of men spiritual blessings is denied to the Spirit of God, and ascribed unto the creature; and our enjoying of salvation is made to depend, not upon God, but upon ourselves. Has this been the doctrine of the church of Christ? No; in opposition unto these blasphemies, let us now hear their unanimous sentiments.

“ Man by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation, so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or prepare himself thereunto. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone enables him freely to will, and to do that which is spiritually good (e).”  
“ Their ability to do good works is not at

(a) Practical essay, page 462.

(b) Do. do. page 505.

(c) History of Christ, page 342.

(d) Do. do. page 515.

(e) Confes. of faith, chap. ix. sect. iii. iv.

“ all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of  
 “ Christ ; and that they may be enabled thereunto,  
 “ besides the graces they have already received,  
 “ there is required an actual influence of the same  
 “ Holy Spirit, to work in them to will and to do of  
 “ his good pleasure (a).” “ The Spirit of God maketh  
 “ the reading, but especially the preaching of the  
 “ word, an effectual means of enlightning and hum-  
 “ bling sinners ; of driving them out of themselves,  
 “ and drawing them to Christ ; of conforming them  
 “ to his image, and subduing them to his will ; of  
 “ strengthening them against temptations and corrupti-  
 “ ons ; of building them up in grace, and establishing  
 “ their hearts in holiness and comfort through faith  
 “ unto salvation (b).” By these quotations, from the  
 subordinate standards of the church of Scotland, we  
 are taught, that there is a supernatural and invincible  
 work of the Spirit of God, by means of the word,  
 accomplished upon the souls of men, in order to their  
 conversion to God, and enjoying eternal salvation;  
 and that this change does not at all depend upon the  
 moral ability, or free will of the fallen creature, and far  
 less can it be wrought thereby. We propose now to  
 present to your view, Christian brethren, the scriptural  
 arguments whereby this truth is confirmed.

This doctrine is confirmed from positive and ex-  
 press testimonies of the holy scriptures ; the few fol-  
 lowing may be mentioned. The words of our Savi-  
 our, and those of his apostle, confirm this truth, and  
 declare the same thing ; says the former, *It is the*  
*Spirit that quickeneth* (c), and says the latter, *But*  
*the Spirit giveth life* (d). Both these texts represent  
 the gracious and saving work of God upon the souls  
 of his people, he quickeneth them, and giveth them

(a) Confession of faith, chap. xvi. section iii.

(b) Larger catechism, quest. 155.

(c) John vi. 63.

(d) 2 Cor. iii. 6.

life. They also direct our views to the glorious person, by whose agency this quickening is accomplished, and this life is given; this is not the creature himself, nor any other of this rank, it is the Spirit of God. The Holy and eternal Spirit of God is the author of that life, which is bestowed upon sinners at the day of regeneration. Another testimony which confirms the same truth is the following: *But such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified—by the Spirit of our God (c).* Three precious blessings of the new covenant are mentioned in these words, regeneration, sanctification, and justification, which all belong unto true believers. How are they bestowed upon them? Is it by the proper exercise of their rational powers, or the right management of their own free will? No such thing is found in the text, nor in all the book of God. The blessings of regeneration, sanctification and justification are bestowed upon sinners by a powerful, divine operation of the Spirit of our God. This truth is also established by the words of the apostle, *According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost (d).* The moving and efficient causes of our salvation are, in these words, distinctly marked; the former is the mercy of God, and the latter is the Holy Ghost, by whose power sinners obtain the washing of regeneration, and are renewed in the Spirit of their minds. We shall only farther observe upon this branch of evidence, that these expressions of scripture clearly prove this truth, where sinners are said to be, *born of water, and of the Spirit (e), to be chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth (f)*; and to be *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the*

(c) 1 Cor. v. 11.

(d) Titus iii. 5.

(e) John iii. 5.

(f) 2 Thes. ii. 13.



*Spirit unto obedience (a).* These and such like expressions, contained in the sacred records, certainly teach us, that it is by a powerful work of the Spirit upon the souls of men, and that alone, whereby the change is wrought in their regeneration, which translates them from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son; and if so, the doctrine we are now endeavouring to establish, must be one of the true sayings of God.

This truth is also confirmed, from the scriptural descriptions of the sinner in his natural state. His situation before conversion is there represented to be such, as clearly proves, both his own inability to recover himself, and that his deliverance must be by the power of the Spirit of God. Let us take a view of what the scripture declares to be the state of the human understanding; and we will find it to be in a very deplorable condition, which is testified by the following evidence. *Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts (b).* *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned (c).* These texts plainly assert that the human mind is by nature under the power of darkness, alienation from God, ignorance and blindness, that it doth not receive, but rejects the things of the Spirit; nay, is under a mournful inability of knowing and discerning them; and how can the creature in this situation do any thing for his recovery? The person who is born blind, may as soon bestow upon himself the faculty of natural vision; as he who is spiritually darkened may of himself discern the things of God. That this mournful description is applicable to all men in their natural

(a) 1 Peter i. 2.

(b) Eph. iv. 18.

(c) 1 Cor. ii. 14.

state, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, saints or sinners, is evident from the confession of the apostle in his own name, and in the name of believers; *But we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another (c).*—Turn we our views to the human will, we shall see depravity raging in this faculty also. The scripture account of it is, *the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed, can be (d).* This leading faculty of the soul, being enmity against God, the person can never of himself chuse the things which please God; but must necessarily set himself in opposition to the will and law of God. All the acts of this faculty must be of this kind, and until sinners are made willing in the day of power, Jesus will ever have reason to complain of them, *ye will not come to me that ye might have life (e).*—If the human heart, and the primary motions of the soul, are the objects of our attention, we may soon see what abominations are there. Of the former it is testified that, *The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (f).* And concerning the latter we are told *that every imagination of man's heart was only evil continually (g).*—As a further confirmation of this we observe, that sinners before conversion are spiritually dead. *And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (h).* As those who are corporeally dead are deprived of all principles of animal life, and their bodily organs immediately cease to perform their natural functions; so those who are morally and spiritually dead are void of all the principles of spiritual life, and are utterly inca-

(c) Tit. iii. 3,

(d) Rom. viii. 7.

(e) John v. 40.

(f) Jer. xvii. 9.

(g) Gen. vi. 5.

(h) Eph. ii. 1, 5.

pable of performing any one spiritual action.—Added unto what is already said, shall only be the relative situation of the sinner in the sight of God, which we will find is a clear confirmation of this doctrine. The sinner is guilty in God's account, he is under a sentence of condemnation, and is obnoxious to the wrath of God. In this situation he can do nothing for his own deliverance, but stands in need of an almighty Saviour. That this is the true account of the sinners state will appear from a few divine testimonies. *And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others (a). He that believeth not is condemned already (b). Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them (c).* Let this short description of the sinner's natural state be weighed, and say, Christian friends, say, even enemies themselves being judges, if there is any hope of the sinner from himself; and if he does not need the almighty power of the Spirit to rescue him from the bondage of corruption, and bring him to the living God.

The scriptural account of the work of regeneration shews, that it can be performed by the power of the Spirit alone. This work is called a quickening from the dead. *Even when we were dead in sins, he quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved (d). The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live (e).* If it is not in the power of the creature, but competent to God only, to raise us from corporeal death; it must be infinitely above created ability, and peculiar to him who hath life in himself, to bring the dead sinner from a state of spiritual death. If it never entered into the heart of man to imagine it in his own

(a) Eph. ii. 3.

(b) John iii. 18.

(c) Gal. iii. 10.

(d) Eph. ii. 5.

(e) John v. 25.



power, to raise his own body, or the bodies of others from the dust of the earth; how absurd must it be for them to suppose that they are able to quicken a soul from death in sin.—By the work of creation is the sinners regeneration represented in the word of God. *For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works (f).* And the converted sinner is said to be *a new creature (g).* If divine power was necessary in the first creation, it is equally so in the second. The distance from nothing to being is not so great, as that betwixt universal spiritual depravity and true holiness, or the image of God. This work of regenerating a sinner must therefore be removed infinitely above the power of the creature, and found performable by him only, who calleth the things that be not, as tho' they were.—The regeneration of the sinner is a begetting him, and is compared to a birth. *Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth (h).* As it is impossible for any man, to be the author of his own generation in the womb of his mother; so it is equally out of the power of the sinner, in a spiritual sense, to beget himself. The text now quoted, ascribes it to its proper author, which is God himself. The creature in his formation in the womb by divine power, being wholly passive, so must the spiritual creature be, when he is begotten again unto a lively hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The spiritual birth of the new creature is also attributed unto God. *Which were born not of blood, nor of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (i).* And they are said to be *born of the Spirit (k).* In opposition unto these plain and positive sayings of Jehovah, how wicked and impious must it be to maintain, that this is in the power of the creature to

(f) Eph. ii. 10.

(g) 2 Cor. v. 17.

(h) James i. 18.

(i) John i. 13.

(k) John iii. 5.

accomplish by his own free will.—In the work of conversion also, Satan is overcome, and the dominion of sin is destroyed; neither of which can any sinner accomplish. Is it possible for the vassals of Satan to free themselves from the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that rules in them, as the children of disobedience? can they who are born in sin, and under its tyranny, cast down this enemy from its throne and dominion in their souls? while we are constrained from scripture and experience to answer these questions in the negative, we are obliged to believe the doctrine now under our consideration to be a part of the faith once delivered unto the saints.

The scripture expressly denies this work to be in the power of the creature, which proves it to be of God through the Spirit. For the illustration of this proof, we need only mention the following texts. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil* (a). The man in his natural state is here described; he is one who is accustomed to do evil. His utter incapacity to accomplish a change upon his nature and life is strongly asserted. It is as little in his power to do this, as it is in the power of the black Ethiopian to change his colour, or the leopard to irradicate his spots, which all know is impossible. The words of Christ also prove the natural inability of the sinner, *No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him* (b). Our Saviour mentions the exercise of a renewed and converted sinner, he comes unto him. The person's inability to do this of himself is here declared by the faithful and true witness; no man can come unto me except the Father draw him. The drawing power of the Father, which is put forth by the personal agency of the Spirit, is absolutely necessary to bring a sinner to Christ; and this exercise

(a) Jer. xiii. 5.

(b) John vi. 44.

is not by any means competent to the creature without it. To these we may add the testimonies of the apostle Paul. *For he saith to Moses I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion, so then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy (a).* This oracle of truth mentions the great blessedness of all believers, they have an interest in the mercy and compassion of Jehovah, and enjoy all their effects. How do they obtain this blessedness? It is not of the sinner, for it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but it is bestowed by the Lord, for it is of God that sheweth mercy. By the same inspired writer, this truth is also confirmed, when he says, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the working of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost (b).* The blessing of eternal salvation is here denied to depend at all upon the creature, or his performances; but is solely ascribed unto the Lord. In these few portions of scripture we are taught, that man has no moral ability before his conversion, to do any thing that is spiritually good; and therefore those who ascribe unto him that power, plainly contradict the words of the holy one.

The insufficiency of all external means of themselves, to convert or save a sinner, proves that it is divine power alone that can accomplish it. Prosperity and adversity are means intended for the good of men. The goodness of God to us in our prosperity should lead us to repentance; and by the sadness of the countenance in our adversity the heart should be made better. But, alas! how often do we see the children of men, under all this variety of divine dispensations, remaining dead in sin, open transgressors of the divine law, and hardened from the fear of God; a sure evi-

(a) Rom. ix. 15, 16.

(b) Tit. iii. 5.



dence that, without the blessing of the Spirit, these means are altogether ineffectual.—The word and ordinances of God also are incapable of themselves to work any spiritual change upon the souls of men. To how many is the word of salvation sent, without producing upon them any saving effect? Multitudes enjoy the preaching of the gospel and the dispensation of other sacred institutions, who notwithstanding perish in their sins. Whence is it so, but to discover the inefficacy of these means, and the need of divine power to render them effectual.—The common operations of the divine Spirit avail not to the regeneration of the sinner. In the days of Noah, the inhabitants of the earth enjoyed these motions of the Spirit, and yet none of them were brought to the knowledge of God. On this occasion Jehovah declares *my Spirit shall not always strive with man upon earth* (a). Of the Jews in the wilderness, and in the days of the apostles, the same thing is declared by Stephen; *Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did so do ye* (b).—Miraculous works will not produce this change upon the sinner. How many professors of religion and others have been witnesses of the miracles which were wrought, and are recorded in the sacred page; and yet have never been brought from a state of sin into a state of holiness.—The most favourable circumstances, in which persons can be placed, in the course of adorable providence, cannot effect upon the state or nature of the children of men a saving alteration. A religious and Christian education, much careful parental instruction, and a godly example have all been found, in the mournful experience of mankind, incapable of making those who have enjoyed them new creatures. Whence is this lamentable unsuccessfulness of these external means? And whence is it that they are, in any instances,

(a) Gen. vi. 3.

(b) Acts viii. 51.

efficacious? Not from the creature's proper use of his moral power or free will. To assert this, is to affirm, contrary to the word of God, that it is of him that willeth, and of him that runneth, and not of God that sheweth mercy. But the true reason is, because in the one case the power of the Spirit of God is withheld from the means of grace, and in the other it is graciously bestowed.

From the scriptural account of the accomplishment of this work, this doctrine may likewise be established. This argument may be illustrated by a passage in the prophecy of Ezekiel, where we have an account both of the forlorn condition of the children of men, and the method of their deliverance out of it. The former is contained in these remarkable words, *and as for thy nativity in the day that thou wast born, thy navel was not cut, neither was thou washed in water to supple thee, thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out into the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born (a)*. Whatever respect these words may have unto the low condition of the people of Israel, yet they must be considered as a description of the deplorable state of the children of men, who are, according to the writings of the New Testament, said to be in the flesh. Let us now see the Lord's method of delivering such a miserable creature. *And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live (b)*. Thus does Jehovah act towards all converted sinners, in their respective times of love, when he, by his Spirit, turns them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. In this description is there any countenance given to the modern notions

(a) Ezek. xvi. 4, 5.

(b) Ezek. xvi. 6.

relative to man's free will? Does it appear from this passage, that God, in sending Christ a person of our own order, a special messenger from heaven, and giving us the outward means of grace, hath already saved us, as far as the matter depends on him, so that if the matter do not stick at us we are effectually saved? If this is the situation in which we are placed, the matter must eternally stick at us, and we shall perish forever. But we have not so learned Christ. Does not every circumstance in this account rather tend to confute, destroy, and annihilate these opinions forever? The conversion of the apostle Paul is an instance of the accomplishment of this work, by which this argument may be illustrated. His own account of it is given in the following words; *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me (a)*. These words, which should sink deeply into our hearts, represent the grand cause of Paul's conversion, and that of every other man, the good pleasure of the great Jehovah; the nature of this work, it is a revelation of Christ in the soul; and the agent by whom it is accomplished, it is the work of God, which work he performs by the Spirit, who, on this account, is called *The Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ (b)*. Paul ascribes to himself no part of the work, nor claims any share in the glory of his conversion to Christ; nay, but he attributes it all to the Lord; and may we not say that all regenerate souls do so likewise.—The conversion of Lydia is an instance of the same thing. Concerning her it is said, *whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul (c)*. Lydia, of her own free will, did not open her heart to receive the gospel. No such thing is hinted; but the very opposite of this is asserted. She was the

(a) Gal. i. 15, 16.

(b) Eph. i. 17.

(c) Acts xvi. 14.



happy subject of an invincible operation of the Spirit, whereby her heart was opened to receive Christ, as he was freely offered to her in the gospel. These instances, unalterably fixing as they do the mode of producing a saving change upon the heart of a sinner, forever exclude human ability from having a share in this business; and ascribe it unto the Spirit of God only, which is an unanswerable confirmation of the doctrine under our view.

The promises of God relative to this work put the matter beyond a doubt; a few of them follow: *And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live (c).* A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them (d). The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion.—Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power (e). For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people (f). Seeing the great Jehovah, in these absolute promises of his grace, has claimed to himself the whole work of renewing and converting sinners, and has made this the subject matter of his promise to his people; must it not be daring and impious in the highest degree to take it from him, and cause it depend upon the creature's free will? If God can only save the children of men, in a moral way, that is, by giving us the

(c) Deut. xxx. 6.

(d) Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.

(e) Psalm cx. 23.

(f) Heb. vii. 4.

overtures of his grace, and presenting motives to induce our compliance with them; but cannot, in a consistency with our free will, put forth an act of his power and grace in circumfusing our hearts, giving us new hearts and right spirits, taking the stony heart out of our flesh, putting his Spirit within us, making us willing in the day of the Redeemer's power, putting his law in our minds, and writing them in our hearts; then all these promises can have no other tendency, but to deceive the children of men, to misrepresent the work of grace in their souls, and to encourage mankind to trust in God for enjoying that which he never will bestow upon them. The enemies of this doctrine have been so inconsiderate as to argue from the commands of God, which require the religious exercises attained unto by the saints, and which are the duty of all, in dogmatically asserting, that were it not in the power of man to do these things, God would never have required them from him. By this opinion the precepts and the promises of God are made to contradict one another; and the former must nullify and supercede the latter. Of what use can the promise of God be, wherein he undertakes and engages to work these things in men, if it is in their power to work them in themselves? Many valuable ends are answered by the commands of God, though man's ability to fulfil them be denied; but upon the supposition of his having this power, not one reason can be given for the revelation of the promise; it must be an unmeaning parade of words. By this opinion it is maintained that the commands of God are the measure of the creature's strength, as well as they are the rule of his duty. That they are the rule of duty is evident from the nature of the thing; but that they are the measure of his strength is denied; and that with warrant from the word of God which declares, *For whom we were yet without strength, in due*

*time Christ died for the ungodly (a).* Those who hold this sentiment plainly maintain, that Jehovah has no right to require any thing of his fallen creature, but that which is in his power to perform. By this manner of arguing, the obligation of the whole moral law is, with reference to rebel men and angels, destroyed for ever. It is contrary to the nature of God, of his moral creature, and the relation subsisting betwixt them; contrary to the eternal and immutable obligation of the divine law on all his rational offspring, notwithstanding of their want of power to fulfil it; and contrary to the possibility of sin being committed in the place of misery. This sentiment being at the foundation of the whole scheme of those who deny the necessity of the Spirit's work in the conversion of sinners, it may be seen, by every spiritually discerning person, to be an abomination which the Lord abhors.

The many absurd consequences, that follow upon the denial of the power and work of the Spirit in the regeneration and salvation of sinners, and attributing this unto the creature's moral ability and free will, may establish our minds in the belief of this part of revealed truth. If this is the case it is not *of God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure (b)*; but it is of the creature who works in himself, both to will and to do what the Lord requires. By the self-determining power of his own free will, which cannot be constrained even by divine influence, the creature chuses the good and refuses the evil, and thus works in himself to will and do. What an absurdity must it be, when the scripture ascribes all this unto the Lord, for any to ascribe it unto man.—From this doctrine it must necessarily follow, that the whole success of the scheme of redemption in the final issue thereof, must depend upon the creature, and not upon God. Having given them the

(a) Rom. v. 6.

(b) Phil. ii. 13.



revelation of his will, he has done his utmost, he can do no more, consistent with their free will; he must leave it in their hands, and stand by an anxious spectator, waiting till he see how man's free will shall determine the matter. If this doctrine is true, it puts it in the power of the creature to frustrate intirely all the designs of Jehovah's love. O how absurd must this representation of the matter be, when we consider that the Lord hath said of himself, *I will work and who shall let it (a).*—This doctrine contradicts the glorious design of God in the work of redemption, which is to stop all boasting in the creature, and to suffer no flesh to glory in his presence. But if sinners put themselves in possession of salvation, by the proper exercise of their own free will, they must have cause for boasting, and that before God.—According to this doctrine, there are no peculiar acts of divine goodness, put forth on them who are saved, any more than on them who perish. He gives them all the outward means of grace, if they use them aright it is well; but if otherwise he cannot help it. He cannot obtrude upon any the blessings of salvation, without their deliberate consent. Their salvation and damnation is equally owing unto themselves.—This doctrine renders the salvation of any of the children of men altogether uncertain. Instead of depending upon the unalterable decree of God, it is rested upon the fluctuating will of the creature. How absurd is this opinion when compared with the words of the apostle, *Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his (b).*—It is not God but the creature that makes himself to differ from others, if this doctrine be true. By the right use of his own moral ability and free will, he hath made himself to differ from those, who, by an abuse of them, remain in a state of condemnation.—According to this sentiment, the church on

(a) Isa. xliii, 13.

(b) Phil. ii. 13.

earth and in heaven, need not sing, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake (b).* A great part of the work is performed by the sinful creature, and certainly a considerable share of the glory belongs unto him. Those who are saved, if this is the way of salvation, may justly sacrifice unto their own net, and burn incense to their own drag; because it was by their own good behaviour, and not by the grace of God merely, that they have reached the enjoyment of eternal life. Let the doctrine, of which these and the like are the native consequences, be reprobated for ever.

What has been said, Christian friends and brethren, may serve to give you a short view of the scripture evidence, by which the doctrine of the Spirit's agency, in our salvation, is supported. While many go about to with-hold from God the glory of their salvation, let it be your concern to ascribe the honour of your's entirely unto him. As many are found denying and contradicting the work of the Spirit of God, deploring their course as ye justly may, endeavour to depend upon the Spirit of promise, and believe and receive the accomplishment of the promise of the Spirit. Pray much for, cherish and comply with the influences of the Spirit upon your souls by his word, ever remembering that *when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth (b).*

(a) Psal. cxv. 1.

(b) John xvi. 13.

## THE CONCLUSION.

THE scripture evidence of some of the most important doctrines of revelation, having been shortly stated, by which at the same time the opposite errors are refuted, you will bear with us a little, Christian friends and brethren in our Lord, while we mention to you as a conclusion of the whole, some things against which we desire to testify, and of which we think it our duty to give you warning. Considering it as the duty of the public ministers of religion in particular, to witness against the error of the wicked, and to inform mankind of the danger to which they are thereby exposed; we shall add a few particulars, in which we mean to discharge this necessary duty.

We give our testimony against those errors, which are prevailing in the land, and would warn you of the danger in which they put your precious and immortal souls. This testimony and warning relative to those errors, we find ourselves, for the following reasons, constrained to exhibit. They are infinitely dishonouring to God. They misrepresent the nature of God, the divine persons, and Jehovah's works of grace.—They are a dreadful dishonour done to the Lord Jesus. By them he is robbed of the glory both of his divine nature, and true mediatorial character. There is no way in which Jesus can be more remarkably despised and rejected of men, than by believing and defending such gross heresies.—They also take away the glory of the Spirit of God. In his personality and divinity he is blasphemed, and despite is thereby done unto him in his work. Well were it for the friends of those errors, that their minds were penetrated with a conviction of that alarming truth; *Whosoever speaketh a-*



gainst the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come (a).—A gross imposition is hereby put upon the holy oracles of inspiration, as if they were the authors of those abominations. The purest fountain of gospel light is perverted, and made the source from which the grossest spiritual darkness does proceed.—These errors are also the pillars of Satan's kingdom. As the great doctrines of the gospel render prosperous the kingdom of Christ; so those errors greatly promote the interest of the kingdom of darkness. Those being maintained, the kingdom of the wicked one, both in the world, and in the souls of men, remains secure; but they being overthrown, it must fall to the ground.—They are exceedingly injurious to the souls of men. These opinions, by which the divinity, sonship, and atonement of Christ, the personality, divinity, and work of the Spirit are denied, you may justly consider, dear Christians, to be statutes by which you cannot live either in grace, or in glory; and therefore they are called, *damnable heresies*, and those who maintain them bring upon themselves swift *destruction* (b). Pressed as our minds are with these considerations, we cannot but offer our solemn protest, and give our most pointed testimony against these doctrines of devils, which are, by speech and writing industriously propagated among professed Christians; and at the same time we earnestly warn all, into whose hands this publication may come, as they regard the glory of God, the interest of religion, and the salvation of their souls, that they beware of receiving or believing those deeps of Satan.

We give our testimony against all these persons, who propagate those errors; and warn all professed Christians to beware of them. That such erroneous teachers are in our land, is evident from some late publications, written by members of the churches of

(a) Matth. xii. 32.

(b) 2 Peter ii. 1.

Scotland and England, from the countenance given thereunto by many of their brethren, and from the testimony and loud complaints of many, who belong to their ministerial and Christian communion. Against these teachers we offer our testimony, agreeable to an approved example, *To whom we gave place by subjection no not for an hour*, for this very important reason, *that the truth of the gospel might continue with you (a)*. In the words of inspiration we warn you against them, *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision (b)*. We give our testimony against, and warn you of such men, because of their ignorance of gospel doctrines. The eyes of their understanding have never been enlightened, in the knowledge of the mysteries of godliness; otherwise they never would have brought those errors into the church of Christ.—Because of their enmity at the method of the sinners salvation, through the blessed Redeemer. The glorious foundations of this plan of grace for men, which were laid in infinite wisdom, mercy and love, are, by these teachers, totally destroyed.—Because of their cruelty to the souls of men. Of the divinity and atonement of him, who is the divine author of their eternal salvation, they entirely rob them. The divinity and saving work of him, by whom they are led unto the land of uprightness, they also take away from them. Judge then, Christians, if they can be the friends, nay, rather say that they are the enemies of precious and immortal souls.—Because of their unrighteous diligence, in spreading this erroneous belief among the Christian people. Not contented with preaching those doctrines from the pulpit, some of them are found going from house to house, with Socinian publications in their hands, inculcating upon poor deluded souls the doctrines contained in them. Of such persons we cannot forbear to say, *O full of all subtilty, and all mischief,—*

(a) Gal. ii. 5.

(b) Phil. iii. 2.

*thou enemy of all righteousness, will thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord (a).*—And because of the deceitful and unmanly manner, in which they often teach their erroneous opinions. On some of those doctrines, they come not forward, as honesty and candor require, and plainly declare their sentiments; but, instead of this, they conceal their real opinions, under dark and ambiguous phrases, that they may, the more easily and successfully, deceive the hearts of the simple. They are also found endeavouring to reconcile the Socinian doctrine, with the pure gospel of Christ; while they may know, that these two are eternally contrary the one to the other. By this procedure they are not the less, but are rather the more dangerous. These things being considered, the reasonableness and necessity of our testimony and warning against them, will clearly appear.

We testify against the gross deceit, hypocrisy, and perjury of the teachers of those errors, who have, at their ordination to the holy ministry, both solemnly vowed before God and man to preach and maintain the doctrines of the gospel, and publicly subscribed the orthodox faith, as it is expressed in the standards of that church, in the communion of which they remain. That there are many persons in sacred office, on the establishments in Britain and Ireland, who answer this description, is an unquestionable fact. Guilty they must be of the grossest deceit, the basest hypocrisy, and the most awful perjury, in preaching Socinian and Unitarian errors, which are directly contrary to that faith, which they are sworn to teach and defend. It is well known, that the ministers on the establishment in Scotland, at their admission to the sacred office, publicly profess their approbation of the Westminster confession of faith; declare it to be the confession of their faith; and solemnly vow to maintain the doctrines contained therein to the ut-

(a) Acts xiii. 10.



most of their power. After such a solemn profession of their faith and engagement to duty, what opinion can we form of the conduct of these men, who, despising and contradicting their ordination vows, endeavour, with all their might, to support and propagate among the Christian people Socinian and Unitarian errors? If this is not deceit, hypocrisy and perjury, it will be impossible to point out the action, which involves those crimes. What dreadful guilt does this system of iniquity bring upon men! Against them the antient charge may be justly exhibited; *Her prophets are light and treacherous persons, her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law* (a). What a fearful example of deceitful dealing, with God and man, is hereby set before the people! In their conduct that awful declaration is daily verified, *From the prophets of Jerusalem is prophaneity gone forth into all the land* (b). We, therefore, testify against all such teachers of religion, and point them out unto you as persons whom you are called to avoid.

We exhibit our testimony against the unfaithfulness of church judicatories, in dealing with Socinians and Unitarians in their communion. Ecclesiastical courts are the ordinance of Christ, for purging his church from error and immorality, by duly censuring or cutting of the heretical, and the unholy. In the proper discharge of this duty, the members of those courts glorify God, honour the Redeemer, vindicate the law and the gospel, edify the church, and do an essential service to the persons of transgressors. For this exercise of their judicial power, they have the command of Christ; *Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes* (c); *A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject* (d). But when the thrones of judg-

(a) Zeph. iii. 4.

(b) Jer. xxiii. 15.

(c) Song ii. 15.

(d) Tit. iii. 10.

ment, the thrones of the house of our New Testament David profane their seat, either by suffering the impure to remain in the church, without enquiring after their way, or by justifying them when their ways are tried before them, no greater injury can be done to the interests of Christ, of truth, of holiness, of immortal souls. That many church judicatories in Britain and Ireland, especially those of the established church of Scotland, have been guilty of this evil, will be, from their public conduct on different occasions, abundantly evident. While some who discovered a degree of faithfulness for the purity of divine truths and ordinances, in opposition unto the errors and defections of the times, have been severely censured by them, even unto deposition from the holy ministry; others, who have been libeled before them for the grossest errors, and most scandalous immoralities, have either escaped the discipline of the church altogether, or been passed without that degree of censure, which the nature of their crimes deserved. The judicatories of the church of Scotland, very lately, have given one of the most mournful evidences of their unfaithfulness in this particular, by declaring their satisfaction with the explanation and apology of Dr. M'Gill, and refusing any further investigation of the affair, than perhaps any church court ever manifested. The words of Solomon, which should be uttered with sorrow and lamentation, may be applied to this, *I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there, and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there (a)*. Against all this mass of judicial iniquity, which we forbear to represent in the detail, we testify, and enter our solemn protest; because it is infinitely dishonouring to God, and injurious to the interests of religion. We also warn you, dear Christian friends, to beware of giving any practical approbation to these impious

(a) Eccl. iii. 16.

courses, whereby the rulers of the church have secured to the erroneous and the immoral a seat in the church of Christ. This warning we give you in the words of the prophet, *say ye not a confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid; but sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread (b).*

We likewise testify against those open blasphemers, the modern Unitarians. The societies of this name have, for some time past, greatly prevailed in England; and several congregations have been lately erected in Scotland. They have separated from the established churches in this island, principally because the doctrine of the Trinity is held by the religious societies established in the land. "It is, says Dr. Price, the conviction that the true object of worship is God the Father only, that in a great measure makes us Protestant dissenters." These societies deny the whole of those doctrines, the evidence of which from the sacred oracles, we have already set before you. Being relieved from the restraints of church establishments, which in some measure bind down the Socinians in Scotland, the Unitarian teachers give loose reins to themselves, in spreading among men, the greatest errors that ever were invented by the father of lies. Their daring impudence in breaking in upon the church's faith, their rage against the most sublime doctrines of revelation, their endeavours to bring down Christianity to a level with natural religion, and their high pretences to Christian charity, render them the most open and dangerous enemies of the church of Christ. Well warranted are we to apply to them the words which are spoken of the antichristian beast, *they open their mouths in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven (a).* Against this unhallowed band we offer our testimony,

(a) Isaiah viii. 12, 13.

(b) Rev. xiii. 6.



and solemnly call upon, and warn all professed Christians, to keep at a distance from the tents of these wicked men, lest they perish in their overthrow.

We also testify against the antiscriptural methods, employed by the Unitarians, to propagate their errors. They have lately sent their emissaries through the principal towns of the nation, to spread their erroneous faith. In order to rouse attention, and collect the inhabitants, they have printed, dispersed, and posted upon the most conspicuous parts of the city hand bills, advertising and inviting the people to their meetings, where the worship of the one true God was to be celebrated. This is the very method which is constantly taken to inform the citizens of theatrical exhibitions; public shews, and other vain and sinful amusements, in order to call, to these nurseries of every abomination, a crowded audience. They have even gone a step farther than this. A weekly meeting has been appointed and held on an ordinary day, in which they publicly dispute their principles with any who shall find themselves disposed to enter the lists with them; and at the same time tickets have been sold for money to all who are admitted to hear the debate. What a disgrace is all this to the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Did ever any of the apostles and followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, take such methods of propagating, among the children of men, the doctrines of his kingdom? are any of those low, selfish and despicable schemes appointed by God in his word, for bringing men to the knowledge of the faith, which is delivered to the saints? We are therefore constrained to testify against all these things, and would warn you, Christian brethren, to beware of giving such practices any countenance; and if you have fallen into this evil through inadvertency, curiosity or otherwise, we beseech you to repent of your sin, and hereafter act according to the divine injunction, *If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into*

*your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that bideth him God speed is partaker of this evil deed (b).*

We likewise warn you of, and testify against the dreadful perversion and abuse of scripture, with which the Socinian and Unitarian writers are chargeable. Finding the spirit and the letter of scripture, to be directly against their tenets, with a view to get over this difficulty, they apply to the words of the Holy Ghost a most unjustifiable and wicked criticism. This they manage, as the necessity of their argument requires, in various ways. To make the scripture support their errors, they sometimes force an unnatural, and, to the book of God, an unknown interpretation upon the words in the original. For answering the same end, they at other times altogether cut off a word from the text, affirming, without any reason, that it is probable it was added to the sacred writings. Again you will find them transposing an original word, from one clause of a verse to another, and giving such a translation of the whole, as will favour their opinions. Instances also there are of their changing one word for another, to make their heresies appear to be supported by the word of God. Relative words they often pervert, by denying their application to there nearest and proper antecedent; and endeavour to find out remote antecedents to which, in a very forced and unnatural manner, they refer them. Some Socinian and Unitarian publications which contain a representation of that scheme of doctrine only, are not so full of these instances; but there are few or none of them, which are intended as a defence thereof, that do not abound with such lawless liberties used with the holy scriptures. Dreadful must that system be, which requires the holy oracles of inspiration to be thus tortured, in order to support it. You will see,

(a) 2 John v. 10, 11.

Christian friends and brethren, that, by these methods, it is very easy to make any declaration or law of God or man teach any opinion as a doctrine, or require any action as a duty which these critics please. By such abandoned and presumptuous methods do Socinians and Unitarians support their errors; and indeed while the scripture is allowed to be the rule of faith, which they have not as yet found it convenient to deny, their heresies cannot be supported without them. With a view to impress your minds with the importance and necessity of our testimony and warning against this sore evil, we present to you the words of Christ; *For I testify unto every man that beareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book.*

We in the same manner testify against the countenance given by the Christian people, to error and erroneous teachers; and warn all who name the name of Christ to beware of this evil. Though the command of God to his children is expressed in the following words, *cease to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge (a)*. Yet many of these, who profess to be his people, attend the ministrations of Socinians every day. Many pulpits in the land are filled with persons who teach their people such dangerous errors; and yet, alas! those synagogues of heresy are frequented by professed Christians. This being the melancholy state of matters among us, warrants us to apply to our times the words of the prophet, *A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land, the prophets prophecy falsely, and the priests bear*

(a) Prov. xix. 27.



rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof (a). Unconcerned about their precious souls, many gospel hearers carelessly receive whatever doctrines are set before them. Not having their senses exercised to discern betwixt good and evil, they put darkness for light, and light for darkness. Indifferent about the eternal salvation of their offspring, many Christian parents carry their children to these nurseries of error, and there they receive erroneous views of divine things. Inattentive to the influence, which their countenancing of erroneous teachers, has upon the general corruption of the place where they live, without either consideration or fear, they submit unto the ministry of those who bring another gospel. This careless and sinful conduct of professed Christians we bewail; against it we testify, and warn all whom we now address to avoid it.

Against all lukewarmness and indifferency about those important doctrines, and the propagation of the opposite errors, we also bear witness. This disposition, dear Christian friends, it is your duty to shake off and abhor. Be not at ease in Zion, when it is a time of Jacob's trouble. Let not your conduct be such as will verify the sad saying, this is Zion whom no man careth for. Cursed shall the person be, who has upon his spirit no concern about these things; for to all such Jesus is saying, *Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth* (b). Unaccountable it must be for these, who profess to hope in Christ for salvation, to remain unaffected, when his divinity is denied. The divine sonship of Christ being rejected of men, how can you, who trust in him for power to become the sons of God, continue to be without concern. To these who have said that they have received from Christ the atonement, and

(a) Jer. v. 30, 31.

(b) Rev. iii. 16.

rested their salvation upon his mediation with God for them, the doctrine, whereby his proper satisfaction is denied, should never be a matter of indifference. And what shall we say of the lukewarmness of Christians, relative to the personality, divinity, and work of the Holy Spirit of God. All who have this as an article of their faith, I believe in the Holy Ghost, are inexcusable before God and men, if they are unconcerned when those truths which belong to him are opposed and contradicted. To those who know the Spirit of promise, have received the promise of the Spirit by faith, and trust in him for sanctification and comfort, this indifference is altogether impossible. We are not now endeavouring, Christian brethren, to awaken your zeal with respect to your political interest, as a nation, or your worldly concerns as individuals; but in relation to those which are infinitely more important, even such as belong to the glory of God, and your own eternal salvation. Upon your minds the words of the apostle should have due influence, *It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing (a)*. If ever there was a good thing presented to the view of men, which rendered indifference about it execrable, and warranted the highest measure of zealous affection for its support, it must be found in these glorious doctrines of revelation, which have been considered. All neutrality about them is a suffering truth to fall in our streets, a consenting unto their burial, and permitting the enemy to tear away the pillars of our salvation; and how criminal this must be in the sight of God, requires no great research to determine. If the precious truths of the gospel promote the divine glory, and the salvation of men; and if the opposite errors injure both, what reason must you have to act, both with respect to the one and the other, in such a way, as you may have cause to say, *The zeal of thine house*

(a) Gal. iv. 18.

*hath eaten me up (a). O Christians regard the divine command, watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong (b). While we disapprove of and condemn all lukewarmness in the matters of religion, we cannot but warn you to beware of this temper of mind; for Jesus has said, Whosoever shall be ashamed, of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels (c).*

Finally, we give our most cordial testimony unto the doctrines, which have been considered in the foregoing sections, with all others which form a part of the sacred system to which they belong; and earnestly call upon you, as our beloved friends and brethren in the Lord Jesus, to give them suitable entertainment. We testify and bear witness unto the truth of those doctrines. We declare unto you, as in the presence of God, and sensible of our accountableness to him, that they are the true sayings of God. In representing them unto you as worthy of your acceptation, we teach not for doctrines the commandments of men; but we declare unto you the gospel of Christ, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandments of the everlasting God, made known unto all nations for the obedience of faith. While all error is a lie, we are free to assert that those truths, being founded upon the word of God, are the truth, are no lie, and that no lie is of them.—We testify unto their importance. As they are true, so they are important also. They are of great importance to the glory of God. If a people, who enjoy divine revelation do not embrace and improve them, God will not consider himself to be glorified, by any actions of theirs. When we believe those truths,

(a) Psalm lxix. 9.

(b) 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

(c) Luke ix. 26.



we glorify God in the highest. They are of importance unto the salvation of sinners. In preaching those doctrines to men, the servants of Jesus tell them words whereby they may be saved.—We bear witness unto their excellency. O how glorious, how precious, how excellent are they! They are the great things of Jehovah's law, which he has written unto us. The gospel, because it reveals to us such sublime mysteries, is called *the glorious gospel of the blessed God* (b). The hearers of the word, by believing those truths, *approve things that are excellent* (c). Because those doctrines give excellent discoveries of the nature, persons, perfections, and works of Jehovah; and reveal unto sinners a great, a precious, an eternal salvation, they must be very excellent; and necessary it is that we count all things but loss, for the excellency of their knowledge.—We further testify unto their suitability to the condition of mankind. Are sinners naturally ignorant of God? To persons in this situation, how necessary must the doctrine of the Trinity be, which gives them the true knowledge of the object of their worship. Do sinners stand in need of one who is able and willing to save them to the uttermost, from sin, Satan, and wrath of God? The revelation of Jesus as a divine person, as the eternal Son of God, and as having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, must be altogether suitable to them. Are sinners dead in trespasses and in sins, and need one to apply to their souls the blessings of salvation? O how suitable to such must those doctrines be, which reveal the divinity, personality, and work of the Holy Spirit of God.—We also bear witness unto their necessity. As they are suitable, so they are necessary to the children of men. In the places of the earth where those truths are unknown, there is no vision, and there the people perish. Professed Christians who despise them, reject

(a) 2 Tim. i. ii.

(b) Phil. i. 10.

the council of God against themselves. All who savingly embrace them, shall never come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life ; according unto the declaration of the Redeemer; *This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent* (a). If these doctrines are not the objects of our knowledge, it is because the god of this world hath blinded our minds ; and if they are not the objects of our faith, it is because we are under the influence of an evil heart of unbelief, which constantly departs from the living God.—We likewise testify unto their powerful influence upon the souls of men, for promoting their sanctification and comfort. The doctrines treated of above, and those which are connected with them, are eminent for advancing the believer's purity and consolation. Since Jesus is the consolation of Israel, and the comforts of believers are the joys of the Holy Ghost, the doctrines of the gospel, which represent the personal glory, and official characters of these divine persons, must be powerful upon the souls of men. Seeing the Lord Jesus is made of God to us sanctification, and the Spirit is the sanctifier of the church ; the truths relating unto them must have influence upon us for this end.

This testimony and witness, in favour of these truths, we are constrained to bear, on account of the following reasons. Because of the divine command. To us his royal orders are, *Bind up the testimony and seal the law among my disciples* (b). The goodness of God to the church, and their duty with reference to this, are strongly expressed in the Psalmist's words ; *For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel; which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known unto their children* (c).—In imitation of the example of Christ's servants. Their

(a) John xviii. 3.

(b) Isaiah viii. 16.

(c) Psal. lxxviii. 5.

faithful and religious practice, which we would desire to follow, is represented in the words of Paul, in application to himself; *But none of those things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God* (a).—For promoting the glory of the three one God, Sensible as we are that it is our indispensable duty, to give unto the Lord the glory that is due unto his name; we have offered our testimony for his truths, that you may behold the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of your God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.—Because of that regard we have to the past generations of the righteous. In their day, the former witnesses of Jesus have borne an honourable testimony to the cause and interest of the Redeemer; and to their courage and fidelity as a mean, it is greatly owing, that the truth of the gospel is continued with us. Revering their memory, and applauding their faithfulness, we desire to go forth by the footsteps of the flock, in bearing testimony also for the precious truths of God.—A concern for the salvation of the present generation of Christians, has determined us to essay this necessary duty. Among them there are, we hope, many believers of those truths. That their pure minds may be stirred up in the way of remembering them, that they may be fortified against the dangers of the times, that their hearts may be more established in the faith of them, and that they may be furnished for giving a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear, we have endeavoured to state the evidence of these sacred truths. In this generation, we have every reason to believe, there are many who deny those important doctrines. To display the banner of truth against all these persons,

(a) Acts xx. 24.



and if possible, to silence, and reclaim them, we have endeavoured, in meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. Some may be found in this age, who are halting betwixt two opinions. That they may be preserved from wandering in the way of them who live in error, and be brought to receive the truth as it is in Jesus, we have exhibited our testimony for these essential articles of the Christian faith.—The good of future generations in the church, has had influence upon our minds. Conscious as we are that it is the duty of every race of Christians, to transmit the truths of God in purity to the following age; we have for this end borne witness unto those parts of the doctrine of Christ, and against the errors whereby they are opposed.

We are now to exhort and warn you men, brethren, and fathers, dearly beloved in the Lord, to give those glorious doctrines, which are infinitely worthy of all acceptance, a suitable entertainment. The entertainment, which it is your duty to give them, may be, in a few particulars, stated unto you. Study to obtain a proper knowledge of them. In obedience to the command of Jesus, and in imitation of the noble Bereans, search the scripture daily, for they testify of the doctrine of Christ. Living in ignorance of these things, as many do, we cannot but undervalue them; but having our minds filled with scriptural ideas concerning them, which is the duty of all, we give them the entertainment which they deserve.—Let those precious doctrines be articles of your belief. Attested as they are unto the children of men, by the veracity of him who cannot lie; it is infinitely reasonable that we receive them, in the exercise of an humble and assured faith. As the word of God contains a standard of our belief, as well as a rule of duty; it must be equally criminal in us to believe in opposition to the

one, as it is for us to practise in contradiction to the other.—Fix your affectionate regard upon those doctrines. As you believe them because they are true, so do ye love them because they are good and glorious. They represent unto mankind what God is in himself, what he is unto his people, and has done for them, and must they not be worthy of our highest affection? To regard them with indifference and to treat them with contempt, must certainly be a very aggravated evil; but to receive them with love, delight and complacency is surely an acceptable, a reasonable service.—Meditate upon these things. Since your Creator has bestowed upon you the faculty of thinking, you cannot employ it better than in the contemplation of those sublime doctrines, which he has revealed unto men. While the things of this world engross the thoughts of many, mind ye the things of the Spirit; that the character of the righteous may be applicable unto you, *in his law doth he meditate day and night (a)*.—Let those heavenly truths be the subjects of your conversation with one another. Blessed are these Christians whose minds are disposed to this exercise, and who, on all proper occasions, give way unto this spiritual inclination, by speaking of the things which concern the King. The most important affairs of human life, the grand concerns of nations, which involve in them the fate of millions, are, when compared with those doctrines, but trivial topics of conversation. Let the example of the saints, and the regard paid unto them by the Lord be before your eyes; *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name (b)*.—Live daily under the influence of those truths, and study to attain a practical conformity unto them. If gospel revelation is duly entertained, it will

(a) Psalm i. 2.

(b) Mal. iii. 16.

render persons holy in all manner of conversation. Evident it is that a constant believing improvement of the doctrines of divine grace, has a powerful influence upon the believer's purity in heart and life, from what the scripture declares concerning both the practice of the Christian, and the gospel of Christ; the former is called *a conversation becoming the gospel* (a), and *the obedience of faith* (b), and the latter is *a doctrine according to godliness* (c), and *teaches us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world* (d). The interests of holiness will flourish in that person, who habitually improves the doctrines of Christ; but they will ever decay, where this exercise is neglected.—Profess those truths before the world. With an entertaining of them in your hearts, you are not to be satisfied, but you should publicly avow and acknowledge them. Men are not called with the heart to believe unto righteousness only, but also with the mouth to make confession unto salvation. Your profession of religion, Christians, should comprehend an approbation of every revealed truth, and an opposition to every error; which profession you are called to make and maintain with honesty and truth, remembering *that if we deny him he will also deny us* (e).—Defend those doctrines against all opposition, and in the face of every danger. As the friends of error are bold in avowing it, be ye also courageous in appearing for the truths of Christ. To contend earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints, is the duty of all professed Christians. Be not silent when you hear it opposed, but according to your ability, speak in its defence. In a better cause you cannot be engaged, for in the end it will triumph over all error.—Communicate to others the knowledge of those doctrines. You have

(a) Phil. i. 27.

(b) Rom. xvi. 26.

(c) 1 Tim. iv. 3.

(d) Titus ii. 12.

(e) 2 Tim. ii. 12.



the truths of God committed to you as a sacred trust, not to improve for your own personal salvation only, but to transmit in purity to the rising race. A due regard you can never show to your own posterity, or the offspring of the church, if this duty is neglected. Prudently improve, therefore, every opportunity which divine providence puts in your power, for making known the favour of divine knowledge in every place. Divine truths are precious and excellent, they are an enriching portion, and therefore *teach them thy sons, and thy son's sons* (a).—Persevere in the faith and profession of those doctrines unto the end. Beware of apostacy from the cause of Christ, whereby the obstinate, the hypocritical, and the deluded make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. This is a most dangerous evil, *For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them* (b). Beware also of instability in your holy profession. Persons of this disposition are carried about with blasts of temptation and error, are unstable as water, and cannot excel, and resemble the waves of the sea, which are agitated by every storm. In opposition unto those evils, be ye valiant for the truth upon the earth, continue in the faith, and endure unto the end, remembering the command and promise of your exalted Redeemer, *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life* (c).

Happy would it be for the nation and the church of God, were persons in every station employing their power, and using their influence for promoting the interests of religion, of divine truths, and of immortal souls. It is the earnest desire of our hearts to see this prevailing in the lands of our nativity. How ought

(a) Deut. iv. 9

(b) 2 Peter ii. 21.

(c) Rev. ii. 10.

Christian rulers in the state to use their authority for this end! Utterly rejecting as we do the fashionable, lax and vicious principles, so prevalent in the present age, which withhold from these who rule over men all concern about religion; we consider it to be their duty to exercise their power, in protecting and encouraging the true religion, and its professors; and in hindering gross idolatry, heresy, and immorality, and all who are chargeable therewith. Were Christian rulers to discharge this duty, in them the promise of God would be accomplished to the church, *Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers* (a). How ought the great, the rich, and the noble to exert their influence in this matter! In the course of holy providence they are, in their station and wealth, raised above others; they are therefore under peculiar obligations to act for God. O how useful might they be, and that perfectly consistent with true honour, by example and otherwise in promoting the interests of the kingdom of Christ. How ought the ministers of the gospel to employ themselves for advancing those concerns! Being set for the defence of the gospel, they are, in a way peculiar to themselves, called to labour in those things. When persons in this office act according to their obligations, they are a blessing to the place where they live; but when they do not so, they are the most useless and hurtful of men. How should the church's eldership concur in the same design! By a godly example, and by ruling well in their office, they would not only acquire for themselves double honour, but be eminently instrumental in preventing the growth of error and immorality, and in promoting that of godliness and truth. How might the heads of Christian families be serviceable to the interest of religion! By family worship, by a religious walk within their house,

(a) Isaiah xlix. 23.

by domestic instruction, and by the proper use of their parental and magisterial authority they will greatly advance the honour and interests of the glorious Redeemer. And how might every professed Christian be useful in his station, for helping forward the work of the Lord! In the proper discharge of the various duties which are incumbent on them as members of families, of societies, of congregations, and of the church, their labour would not be in vain in the Lord. Were men in every station to act for the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the good of the church, we should no more be termed, forsaken; neither should our land any more be termed desolate, but we should be called Hephzi-bah, and our land, Beulah; for the Lord would delight in us, and our land should be married.

*And now, brethren, we commend you to God, and to the word of his grace which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified (a). Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen (b). Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen (c).*

(a) Acts xx. 32.

(b) Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

(c) Jude v. 24, 25.

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